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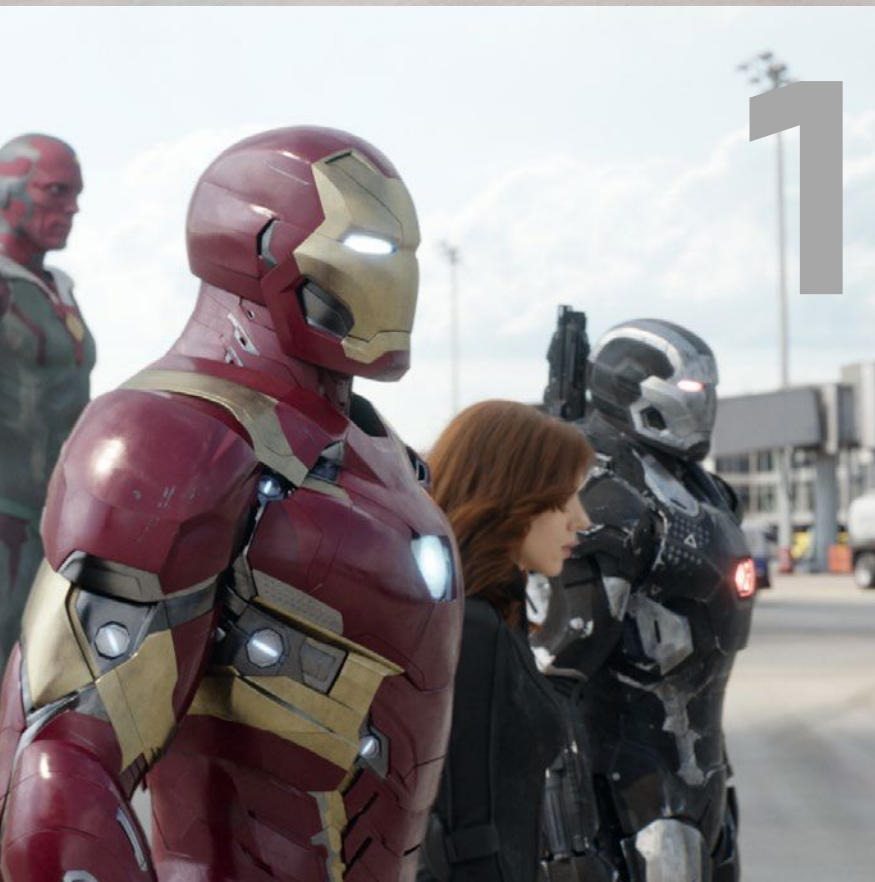
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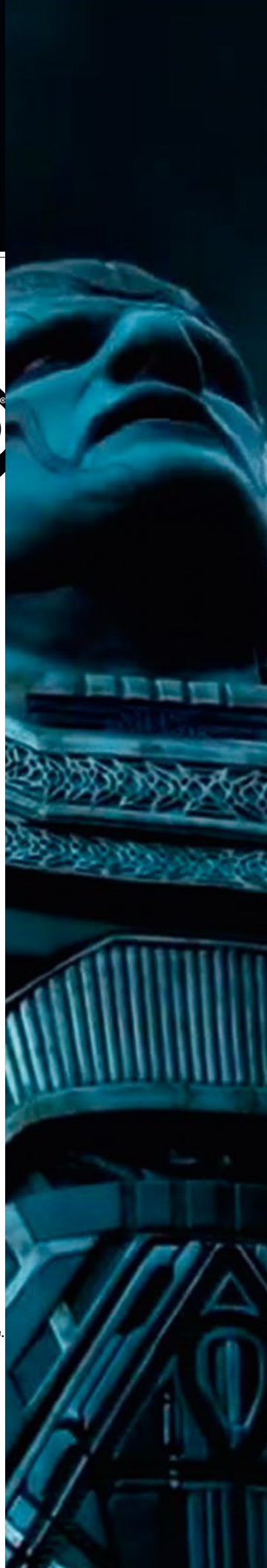
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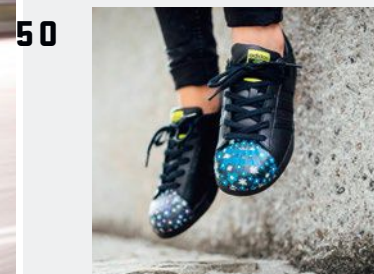
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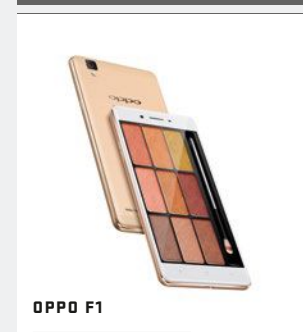
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This May, we put through the ringer the Lenovo Yoga 900, OPPO F1, Ricoh Theta S, Lotus Elise, Ford Ranger Wildtrak, and many more!



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AT THE RISK of giving you, dear reader, superhero fatigue, we present a double-cover superhero extravaganza. This comes hot off the heels of last month's *Batman v Superman* cover. But we really shouldn't worry about an overload, should we? Not if it's the year's most anticipated superhero smackdown.

Make that smackdowns, as not only do we have Team Cap taking on Team Stark in *Captain America: Civil War*, we also have the never-ending battle between good and bad mutants in *X-Men: Apocalypse*. Which is why this month brings us a contest of titanic proportions (never mind that it also happens to be Presidential elections month).

But that's not all that's going to make your heart beat faster. We've got the latest cars and bikes from last month's Manila International Auto Show (MIAS) and the IR Bike Fest. We feature the latest devices from Mobile World Congress in Barcelona. We even went to Switzerland for a glimpse of the most drool-worthy watches at Baselworld.

On the Lifestyle front, we showcase some really cool kicks from collaborations between the stars and the shoe companies, as well as stories on drinking tea, vaping, and the activity we all can't seem to get enough of, sleep.

Of course, living up to our name, we have opinions on a range of subjects from the demise of point-and-shoot cameras, the pervasiveness of superheroes in our culture, and the seeming improbability of achieving work-life balance.

Last, but not least, is a comprehensive test section reviewing cars, computers, cameras, smartphones, video games, and audio equipment.

We've really packed a lot of informative and entertaining stuff this month. It's definitely going to be a hot summer!

Enjoy the issue.

Manny de los Reyes
Editor-in-Chief/Publisher



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CAPTAIN AMERICA CIVIL WAR:

THROUGH THE EYES OF ITS DIRECTORS



ANTHONY AND JOE RUSSO return to the world of Captain America at the helm of Marvel's *Captain America: Civil War*. In their initial approach to the film, the directors had definite ideas of the story and where it would go.

"The concept of *Civil War* is very important," says Joe. "We felt like we needed to go in a radical direction if

we're going to do another *Captain America*. So we were strongly advocating for the *Civil War* storyline. Then once everyone agreed to it, we had a lengthy meeting with the writers and executive producer Nate Moore. We sat and carefully broke out the arcs of each character, figured out what we wanted the movie to be and spent probably

close to a year in a room working on the script."

Anthony adds, "I think maybe the most important thing to us when fulfilling the ideal or promise of *Civil War* was that we didn't want to fall into a structure where the Avengers move into a conflict mode with one another then repair that and fight another bad



guy. It was very important to us that the structure of the film be such that the Act III climax was between the actual Avengers themselves. That's challenging because we wanted everybody to be both protagonist/antagonist in the movie at the same time. We didn't want to find one easy villain among the Avengers. So it was very challenging

on a storytelling level to put them in head-to-head conflict for the climax of the film, while at the same time finding a way for everybody to be a little bit right and a little bit wrong."

Luckily for the directors, *Captain America: The Winter Soldier* writers Christopher Markus and Stephen McFeely returned to take on the new

project. "The structure of these movies is very complex and difficult," comments Joe. "It's hard to balance all those characters. Some writers are great with structure. Some writers are great with dialogue. Markus and McFeely are fantastic with both. They're fantastic with voices; every character has a distinct voice. We're

“I think maybe the most important thing to us when fulfilling the ideal or promise of *Civil War* was that we didn’t want to fall into a structure where the Avengers move into a conflict mode with one another then repair that and fight another bad guy. It was very important to us that the structure of the film be such that the Act III climax was between the actual Avengers themselves.”

of a common mind of the tone that we like to bring to these movies. It’s more grounded. And it’s based in realism. There are political undertones to a lot of the work as well. We try to reflect real world issues so that the movie has immediacy for the audience. It’s great because I think we’ve all been like a Vulcan mind meld in the room where we’re all working towards the same goal.”

“It was very important to us and our director of photography, Trent Opaloch, that there would be a visual consistency and that we’d start to introduce a language that would be new and fresh. At the same time we are continuing Cap’s story, and where *Winter Soldier* was a political thriller, this is a psychological

thriller. It’s still in the same genre, so we wanted to bring some of the energy from that movie into this film.”

Both directors are impressed with Chris Evans, who returns as Steve Rogers a.k.a. Captain America. “Chris has grown tremendously,” says Joe. “There’s a real gravitas and maturity that Cap has. This is reflective of where Chris is in his life. Now we’ve said it before that he’s an incredibly technically gifted actor. He’s amazing with physicality, with understanding where the cameras are. He’s fantastic with stunts, which allows us to use him a lot in the movie to do his own fighting and do his own stunts. That adds a level of realism that we crave. In our minds, he has successfully taken

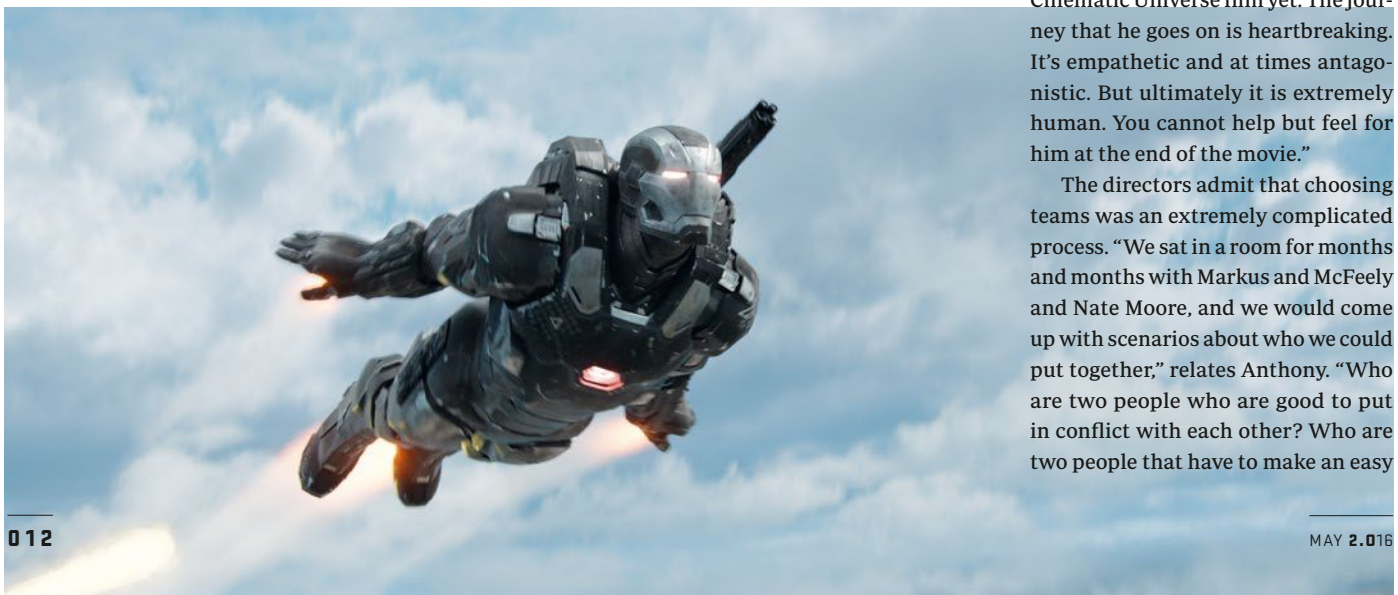
the character from someone who is taking orders in the first movie from an institution and who is now giving orders as a kind of revolutionary. So it’s a really interesting arc for somebody named Captain America.”

In the movie, Cap leads one team opposing governmental oversight of the Avengers and Tony Stark (Robert Downey Jr.) leads the other team that is in favor of the initiative. Anthony explains how this came to be: “The book *Civil War* is so grounded in this idea of Captain America leading one side versus Iron Man leading the other side that we just thought that was critical if we were going to try it in the Marvel Cinematic Universe. It was critical that we had those two components. So we spent a long time thinking about those two, who are the two leaders of the Avengers. Tony coming from his Stark point of view, like, ‘I’m the sizzle. And I bring the money. And I bring the tech.’ And Cap from his morally grounded point of view that gives him the right of leadership. It’s like two great yin and yangs—rivals for the leadership. So it was really important to us early on.”

Anthony continues, “Robert [Downey Jr.] has done several of these movies now and while he loves the role, I think everybody is always looking for ways to surprise themselves and surprise audiences about where we can go. We had a very clear idea about how we wanted to do that with this movie, and once Robert got into that he became very excited about it. He’s been an amazing collaborator on this film.”

Joe adds, “The level of intelligence and thought and work ethic and creativity and ingenuity that Downey’s brought to this is incalculable. It’s probably the most complex role that any of the actors had in a Marvel Cinematic Universe film yet. The journey that he goes on is heartbreaking. It’s empathetic and at times antagonistic. But ultimately it is extremely human. You cannot help but feel for him at the end of the movie.”

The directors admit that choosing teams was an extremely complicated process. “We sat in a room for months and months with Markus and McFeely and Nate Moore, and we would come up with scenarios about who we could put together,” relates Anthony. “Who are two people who are good to put in conflict with each other? Who are two people that have to make an easy





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alliance with one another? It was really just playing with all the fun and the combinations of those in the movie and then figuring out how it fell out. There wasn't any formula that we used other than we wanted to surprise ourselves and figure out what was fresh and new in the storytelling. But also I would say what was really determinant too was it was really important to us that every single character had a personal, emotional reason for making the choice that they made. And that it was tracked in their arc from the beginning to the end of the movie."

So, when the process was all said and done, where did each Avenger wind up? Joe offers, "On Cap's team you've got Captain America and the Winter Soldier/Bucky Barnes [Sebastian Stan]. Obviously Cap's relationship with Bucky goes back almost a century, and now that Bucky is regaining parts of his memory and a semblance of who he was in the past, there's no question that he would support Cap. Cap also has Falcon [Anthony Mackie] who is his new brother-in-arms and his best friend in the modern world."

Anthony jumps in, saying, "Scarlet Witch [Elizabeth Olsen] is also on the team. Scarlet Witch has an interesting place in the Avengers since she's a new Avenger. She's younger. She needs somebody with more experience and knowledge of the world to look out for her and Cap becomes a bit of a protector for her in the film."

Joe reminds, "There is also Hawkeye [Jeremy Renner], who supports Cap and owes a debt to the Scarlet Witch because of the sacrifice her brother made for him."

"And there's a new surprise member of this team, which is Ant-Man [Paul Rudd]," says Anthony. "Falcon has a special knowledge and relationship to Ant-Man that ends up being their trail to him in the film."

Joe offers, "In addition, Ant-Man is the history of the anti-Stark sentiment as expressed by Hank Pym in the *Ant-Man* movie. He would naturally also fall into that camp of being anti-Stark and anti-authority as you can also see from his past as a criminal who committed an anti-establishment crime that tried to right some wrongs. So again he lines up pretty cleanly on Cap's side."

Tony Stark's team is a little more complex, as Joe explains: "There is



Rhodey [Don Cheadle], who is his longtime friend. Rhodey comes from a military background and understands structure and order and discipline. He understands a need for oversight and clearly made the choice to side with Tony in the Sokovia Accords."

"Vision [Paul Bettany], in this movie, expresses a theory that he has computed in his brain that has to do with the cost of heroism in the world. It's an equation. He sees the logic in oversight as well. He functions more as a peaceful cop than a full-fledged, card-carrying member of Tony's team. He's trying to get both sides to behave in a manner that's acceptable and move forward in a very logical way to accept oversight. As the movie progresses, it's complicated by the fact that Vision is starting to experience affection for Scarlet Witch, which is something from the books that's a great arc for him," concludes the director.

One of the surprise members of Iron Man's team is Black Widow, played by Scarlett Johansson. "It's surprising for a couple of reasons: number one, because of her close relationship with Cap from *The Winter Soldier*," says Anthony. "They formed a very nice bond with each other through the film. Number two, at the end of that movie she basically told the government to kiss off when they suggested that they had some control over her and what the Avengers were doing."

"So, she's already gone on record as saying that they're this independent organization and that they're not going to listen to a government that may or may not be corrupt," continues Anthony. "There are some events that happen in the beginning of *Civil War* that convince her that the Avengers have gotten into a position where maybe they have to earn back some trust from the public, and she thinks the road to doing that is through registration and agreeing to some measure of oversight."

Joe concludes, "Black Widow makes an ideological choice rather than an emotional choice. The emotional choice obviously would be to side with Cap. She thinks that if they go down the road of anti-oversight that the government ultimately will tear them apart, and she's trying to hold the family together because she realizes its value to Earth."

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▲
Chadwick Boseman
plays Black Panther

In the movie, Black Panther, played by Chadwick Boseman, makes his first appearance as a superhero and aligns himself with Iron Man's team. Joe explains how they approached introducing him: "It's interesting because you have sides in the movie and we thought about where else we could go with a new character. He can come

at the situation with his own motivations and a certain neutrality. Black Panther's not interested in oversight and has nothing to do with it. He is on Tony's side purely for personal reasons. So, again, it was very important to us that everybody had an emotional motivation in the film. As the movie progresses, allegiances form. People

make temporary truces with each other or temporary allegiances to move forward and try to attain a common goal."

"There's something really exciting about introducing Black Panther in a Captain America movie because Cap is known for his vibranium shield and Black Panther comes from Wakanda where the vibranium came from that

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made Cap's shield," offers Anthony. "Black Panther wears a vibranium suit, so there's a natural symmetry between the two characters and their iconography. That was really fun and exciting. The suit is beautiful and it gives him very unique strengths."

William Hurt reprises his role of General Thaddeus Ross and the Russos were happy to have him back. "It's always great to bring a character back into the universe that has a point of view and then apply that point of view or alter it slightly to give them a new presentation," says Joe. "We thought it'd be interesting to take General Ross, who is this hard-ass, give him that same agenda of control of superheroes. You need an actor of his magnitude and his presence to be able to stand in front of that group of actors and hold the room and make the audience fear for the future of the Avengers."

Shooting practically with a grounded sensibility was a style choice for the directors that started when they directed Marvel's *Captain America: The Winter Soldier*. Explaining the approach, Anthony says, "We thought about what is special about Captain America. At the end of the day we concluded that on the spectrum of what the Avengers are, Cap's the most grounded and the most everyman version of a superhero. So we tried to tailor the style of the film to something that was human size and more relatable to what we knew people are capable of as opposed to what gods are capable of. That led us to shooting more practical locations than we normally would and executing action in a way that's more grounded than fantastical. And we continued that."

"We took that style forward into this film even though we had to expand it a bit in this movie because this movie isn't as confined to one type of superhero. In this movie we have other Marvel characters with much more fantastic



► Team Cap on the attack



abilities entering the equation. So we took that grounded world of Cap and blew it up a little bit for this movie. But I think we stayed rooted in that fidelity to real locations," concludes the director.

According to Joe, shooting the highly anticipated battle scene was "completely surreal." He explains, "It's a fantasy of everyone who reads comics to find out which superhero is the strongest and what would happen if their favorite heroes fought each other. It was amazing to be out there watching everyone in costumes running at each other and just thinking what a journey it's been from being ten years old on the back porch of my buddy's house reading *Secret Wars* to this. We had other comic book fans out there around the crew who were tearing up. It's amazing to see how much impact this mythology has on people who grew up with it because they ascribe very specific feelings and emotions to these characters. They represent something very important to people."

When you watch Marvel's *Captain America: Civil War* Joe hopes you'll connect to the humanity in all of the characters. "They're all equal parts good and bad and they're flawed. They're extremely relatable as human beings in

▲ Spidey springs a surprise



► Elizabeth Olsen reprises her *Age of Ultron* role as Scarlet Witch

the movie, and I think that that's what people are going to gravitate towards. It's very complicated and hard to decide who's right and who's wrong. It's surprising and it's scary. I think what people will like about the film is that it moves to a place that you can't predict when you sit down to watch it."

Smiling, Anthony adds, "Also on a simple level there's just the thrill of watching your favorite superheroes beat the hell out of each other." ●

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Way of Life!

The background of the poster is a dark, moody image of a stormy sky with swirling clouds. In the bottom right corner, a portion of a character's arm and hand is visible, wearing a blue and silver mechanical gauntlet with a textured, scale-like surface.

X-MEN

APOCALYPSE

PHOTOS COURTESY OF 20TH CENTURY FOX

IF THE X-MEN thought they'd faced their biggest challenge with altered timelines and killer robots in 2014's *Days Of Future Past*, they've got a powerful new thing coming. *X-Men: Apocalypse* sees an ancient, incredibly formidable mutant awakened from thousands of years of slumber and decide that the world of the 1980s needs a giant reset • Bringing to life this complicated, godlike figure is the talented Oscar Isaac. Since his big break in 2002's *All About The Benjamins*, Isaac has been working consistently in film, appearing in the likes of *Body Of Lies*, *Sucker Punch*, *The Bourne Legacy*, *Inside Llewyn Davis*, *A Most Violent Year*, and in 2015 alone, made a huge impact in both *Ex Machina* and *Star Wars: The Force Awakens*. •• He talks *Apocalypse*'s philosophy, his own X-Men fandom, and working with the "pit crew" who helped get him in and out of costume.

What was your familiarity with the X-Men?

I was a big X-Men comics fan! I collected *X-Factor* in particular, which I really liked, and which features the first appearance of *Apocalypse*. It's actually because of that, because of how much I loved the character, that when I found out that they were making an X-Men movie with *Apocalypse* as the villain, I sought it out. I was very curious about what they were going to do with it.

How did Bryan (Singer) pitch the angle to you?

Basically, the idea is "Imagine that God has been buried for the last 3,000

years and he wakes up tomorrow and he takes a look around and realizes, 'No, we've ruined everything, this isn't what it was supposed to be,' and decides to change things." That's it. What if God wakes up and he's pissed! It's the concept of the second coming, Christ returns to take the chosen ones and all the rest will be destroyed along with the world. It's really intense, it's really heavy, and so this character is the embodiment of that idea. Or at least, as someone who believes that's their mission. On the other side of it, the non-religious side, there's "What if this guy was the first mutant, and what if his power was that he was the

Q&A WITH OSCAR ISAAC: THE MAN BEHIND APOCALYPSE

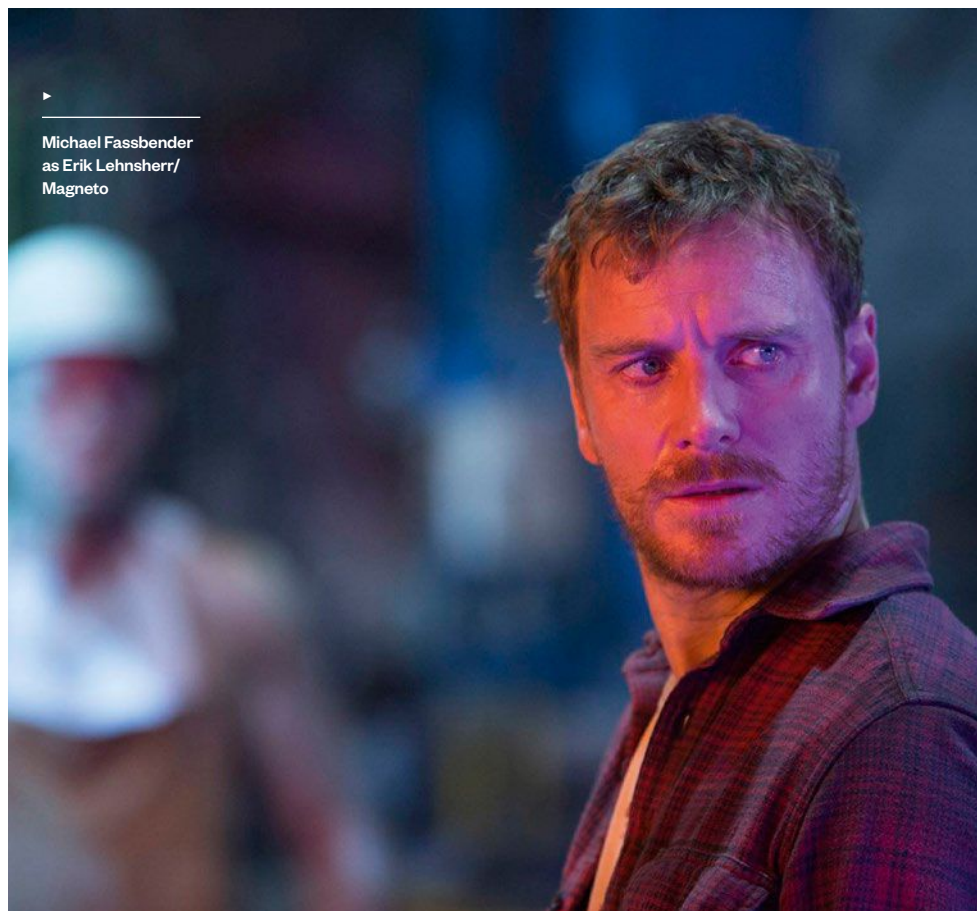
first being to be able to actually physically separate their consciousness from their body, to have, for all intents and purposes, a biological soul?" It's also that sci-fi notion that I thought was very interesting in a fun, mind-bending way.

What's also fun is drawing from the different iterations of the comic. Because he's changed quite a lot from series to series, whether it's *Apocalypse vs. Dracula* or the original '80s *X-Factor* or the cartoon. He moves from host to host and that's part of the plan, and then at some point that gets interrupted for many thousands of years. When he awakens, he decides he's the steward of the rest of humanity and of evolution, not only physical or biological, but spiritual, and when that's in danger, he clears the forest for new growth, like he's done many times in the past.

X-Men movies always have big themes, and it feels like he brings that too.

Yeah. It's a purging that's happening, so that's part of the bigger theme. And this idea of a wrathful god and what that means. But "apocalypse" as a word doesn't necessarily mean "destroy." It means "reveal," and he's revealing the true potential of their power, of the people that choose to follow him. It's partly why they follow him: because they see that this being actually allows for their most powerful self to emerge. And that's one of his greatest strengths, his power of persuasion.

▶
Michael Fassbender
as Erik Lehnsherr/
Magneto



How was he brought to life? Was it a tough job?

The design was challenging. My entire head was encapsulated in prosthetics and glue and plastic and tubes. What was fun about that was I was able to express quite a lot through that because of how thin it was. The suit was 40 pounds, and I had to wear a cooling mechanism underneath and my range of motion was incredibly limited.

▼
From left to right:
Jennifer Lawrence
as Raven Darkhölme/
Mystique, Rose
Byrne as Moira
MacJaggert, James
McAvoy as Charles
Xavier/ Professor
X, Lucas Till as Alex
Summers/Havok,
and Nicholas Hoult
as Hank McCoy/
Beast

So for me, it became a challenge of how to express that in a different way. Obviously, we're not doing naturalism here; it's more akin to Greek tragedy and *Kabuki* theater. I actually watched some *Kabuki*, paying attention to the physical traits that they used, because, for them, even small gestures are so important. Then I'd have to figure out how to work within it. What seemed most expressive, what was too much, what wasn't enough. I had an incredible makeup crew, guys from Legacy Effects, and they were fantastic and there the entire time, making little tweaks and adjustments.

Did they make it easier for you to get in and out of it?

Yeah, that was a process. At first, it was a three- to four-hour makeup job, and as the time went on, we got it down to about an hour, which was pretty astounding. And I had some great wardrobe people who were like a pit crew at all times; two costumers who would rip the thing off of me, because the heat was so intense and the makeup guys would come in and try to fix it up in between takes. Everyone found a way to do it so fast. At the beginning, it would





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take me 40 minutes just to put the suit on and we got that down to 15 minutes, so it was a very impressive team of people. And this isn't even mentioning the CG that gets added later to aspects of the character, particularly in certain moments of the movie. So it really is a team effort to make this character come to life.

How did the cast welcome you?

They seem like a fun bunch.

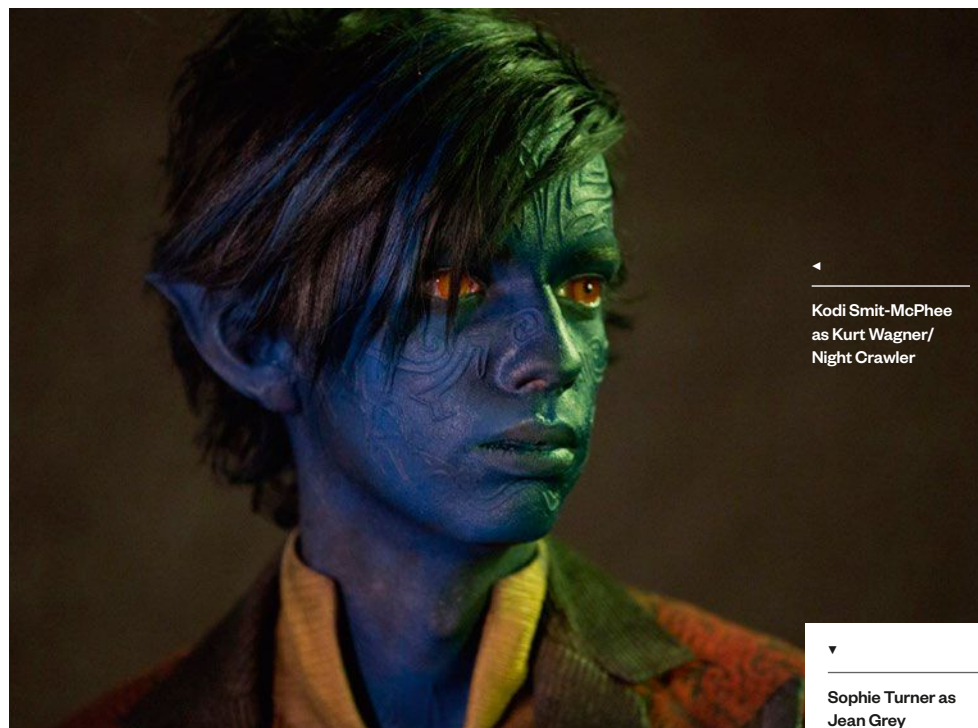
Apart from being *Apocalypse*, being able to work with Michael Fassbender, James McAvoy, Nick Hoult, and Jen Lawrence, in particular, was so much fun. They're so funny, relaxed, and have two of these movies under their belts, so that was helpful, getting a sense of how they work. At first, most of my scenes were with Michael and that was an instant friendship and as great as I'd hoped it would be. So that really was the highlight for me, getting to meet those guys and working with them.

Did Jennifer commiserate with you about the makeup situation?

Oh yeah! I was her brother in blue! I felt her pain for sure.

How was it working with Bryan?

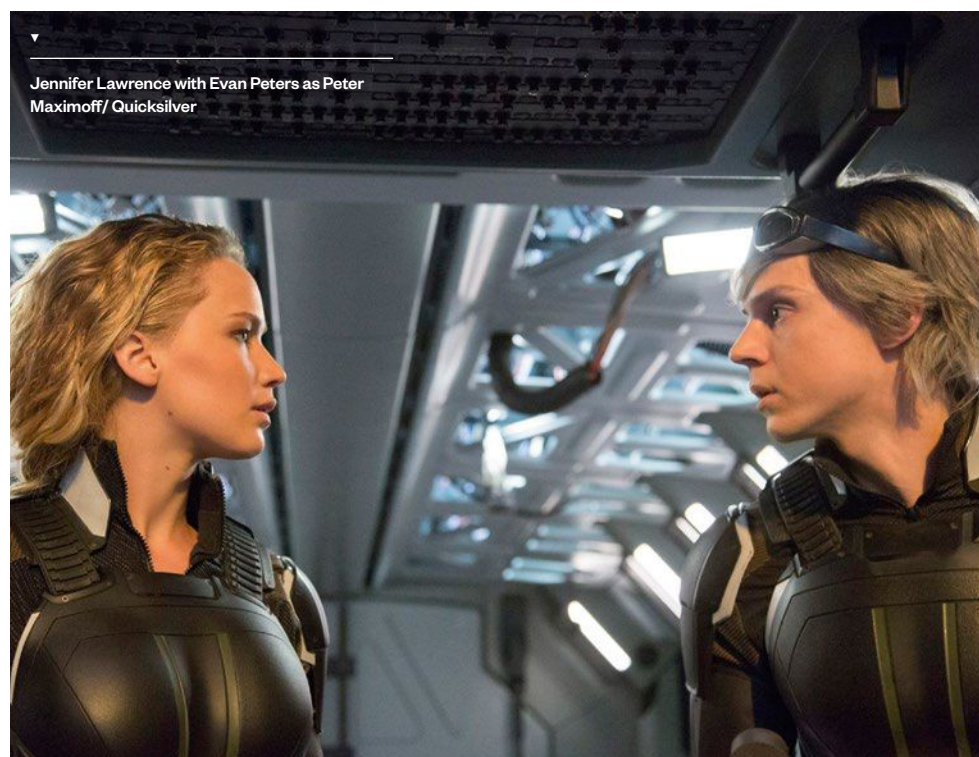
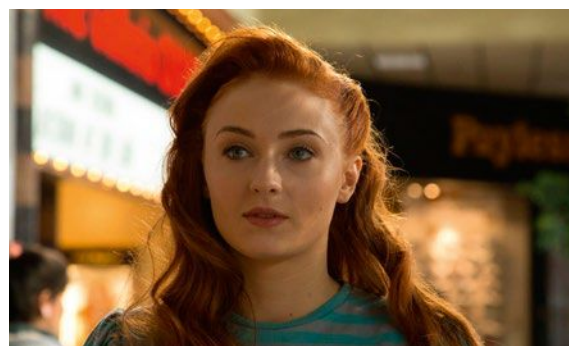
He's incredibly collaborative and such a smart man, and really switched on into the themes of the story and what



Kodi Smit-McPhee
as Kurt Wagner/
Nightcrawler

Sophie Turner as
Jean Grey

we're trying to do there. I had a great time with him and Simon Kinberg just talking about what's possible with this character and how to make it something interesting and special, not only for the audience but also for us; what did we want to explore so we could make it personal? And he was very open to those ideas and to playing with the themes and the dialogue and I really enjoyed that.



Jennifer Lawrence with Evan Peters as Peter
Maximoff/Quicksilver

Is there something you're glad you brought to *Apocalypse*?

I think connecting it to a real spiritual idea; that aspect was interesting to me. There were a few things that we came up with dialogue-wise in the whole thing that I was really glad about, but I can't say any of those without spoiling things! We wanted some things that were unexpected.

Days Of Future Past was huge in terms of scale and success. What can we expect from *Apocalypse*?

What we can expect is the idea that family is still a huge thing. It's a huge scale; this is the biggest one yet. And real conflicts for them, for one of the first times. They're fighting against each other, not only for the survival of the world, but of what the X-Men are.

And are you now going to pitch *Apocalypse vs. Dracula*?

Yeah! We'll do a spin-off! ☺

X-MEN: APOCALYPSE OPENS MAY 18 IN CINEMAS (IMAX AND 3D SCREENS) FROM 20TH CENTURY FOX.



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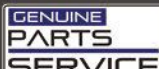
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10 HOT, NEW CARS FROM MIAS 2016

THE MANILA INTERNATIONAL Auto Show or MIAS has become a summer tradition for petrol heads and car enthusiasts alike. Already dubbed the biggest motor show in the country based on floor space, this year's outing saw 19 brands duke it out on the show floor. With MIAS celebrating its 11th anniversary this year, it's fitting to filter the 300 or so car exhibits and come up with the 10 cars significant, new cars launched at the show. Without further ado, these are the stars, in alphabetical order, of the 11th Manila International Auto Show.





1.

Chevrolet Sail

Chevy takes on the bestselling Toyota Vios (not to mention the Honda City, Mazda2, Ford Fiesta, Kia Rio, Hyundai Accent, Nissan Almera, and Mitsubishi Mirage) with its all-new Sail. It's becoming a crowded subcompact sedan segment, alright, but the Bowtie brand has enough up its sleeve to play the game. It's built atop GM's new state-of-the-art small car architecture using a high-strength chassis, which means that you can expect the Sail to deliver a smooth, safe, and quiet ride. It's a fairly large sedan for its class, so expect generous cabin space as well. Two engines put the wind in this Sail: a 1.3- and a 1.5-liter inline-4 with variable valve timing, with 5-speed manual or 4-speed automatic transmissions. Price: **P688,888 to P816,888**



2.

Ford EcoSport Black Edition

Ford is capitalizing on its impressive sales momentum by introducing new variants to its bestselling EcoSport. The new Black Edition joins the lineup and as its name suggests, it swaps some of its high-gloss silver trim pieces for black ones including those in the upper and lower front grille and alloy wheels. The side mirrors are also decked in a high-gloss black finish as well. The more rugged appearance package is completed by the cross bar roof rails. Inside, the well-appointed Black Edition gets more piano black accents as well as aluminum sports pedals and an aluminum scuff plate. Apart from the EcoSport Black Edition, the new variant of the Everest—the P1,799,000 Titanium Premium 4x2 debuts as well. Price: **P998,000**

Aside from their truck and commercial vehicles, Tata Motors displayed the spacious and comfortable Tata Manza Aura, the youthful and sporty Tata Vista Ignis in full wraparound body kit, and the Tata Indigo diesel sedan.



3.

Foton Toplander

Not content with positioning the Toplander as a more affordable alternative to the usual suspects of Fortuner, Montero Sport, and Everest in the midsize 7-seat diesel-powered SUV class, Foton showed off two higher-spec'd variants of its capable and well-built contender: the Toplander Executive and the Toplander Xtreme. Costing P100,000 more (P1,098,000 for the 4x2, P1,398,000 for the 4x4), the Executive adds leather seats, rain gutters, and LED daytime running lights. And for an additional 100 grand over the Executive (P1,198,000 for the 4x2 and P1,498,000 for the 4x4), the Xtreme adds an Ironman Snorkel, tow hitch, and 20-inch Black Rhino alloy rims wrapped with 265/50 all-terrain Saffiro tires on top of the rain gutter and LED DRL's (but not the leather seats). Price: **P998,000 to P1,498,000**

Chevy Brand Ambassador Mavy Legaspi with the Chevy Sail flash mob





4.

Hyundai Veloster

Hyundai first teased us with its radically different sports car/coupe four years ago. And now it's truly finally here. It's radical not just because of its novel rakish hatchback body style, but because of the fact that it has a concealed rear door on the passenger side, making this perhaps the "two-door" with the easiest ingress/egress for rear passengers. A high-compression turbo gasoline direct-injection (GDI) engine delivering power to the front wheels—no drifting in this sporty Hyundai—motivates the Veloster. Price: **P1,548,000**



6.

Mercedes-Benz A-Class

Creating a paradigm shift since its launch in 2012, the Mercedes-Benz A-Class is refreshed this year for added sportiness. The striking lines and curved surfaces of Mercedes-Benz's hot hatch now adds a new arrow-shaped front bumper, newly designed rear lights, and exhaust tips that are now integrated into the rear bumper. Inside, the cabin maintains its driver-centric nature while boasting of better materials, new dial graphics, and switchgear. The freestanding center display is also increased in size and is now fitted with Apple CarPlay. It also gets push-button engine start/stop, driver's seat with memory, and selectable driving modes. Price: **From P2,580,000**



5.

Jeep Wrangler Unlimited Sport

Jeep wants a piece of the premium rough-and-tumble off-roader market with the 2016 Wrangler Unlimited Sport. Celebrating 75 years, it's already one of the most recognized vehicles in the world thanks to its unmatched off-road capability and legendary four-wheel drive system. The body-on-frame Wrangler features front and rear live axles with a five-link setup and electronic lockers. Its rich history is apparent with its classic styling (round headlights, seven-slot grille, trapezoidal wheel flares, and exposed hinges) and highly versatile interior. The biggest news though is the expanded product line that grows the range to five variants including the Pentastar V6-powered Unlimited Sport which bows in at less than P2-million making it the most affordable Jeep model. Price: **P1,990,000 to P3,390,000**



7.

Mitsubishi Mirage

Mitsubishi is relentlessly tweaking and improving its little bestseller, the Mirage. Still sporting an affordable sticker price, the 2016 Mirage boasts more sound insulation for lower NVH and upmarket features like HID xenon headlamps, daytime running lights, and LED taillights. The front end, with a new hood, grille and bumper, looks more like its G4 sedan sibling's. The cabin has been revised as well with higher-grade materials. The very thrifty 1.2-liter 3-cylinder, manual or CVT drivetrain are carried over (although the CVT is retuned to improve performance and fuel economy). Price: **P553,000 to P713,000**



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8.

Peugeot 308 GTi

We were fortunate to have driven the 308 GTi in its natural habitat of mountain roads in Nice, France two years ago. It was a stunning performance from a 200hp hot hatch on challenging roads. But that was before Peugeot Sport, the motorsport branch of the French carmaker, got its hands on it. And now that they have, this even hotter limited-edition 308 GTi (the first and only model in the whole Southeast Asian region) gets even more horses under the hood—to the tune of a class-leading 270! From probably the hardest-working 1.6-liter powerplant in existence, the red-and-black Exocet missile rockets from 0 to 100 in just six seconds. Power transmission to the front wheels is via reinforced six-speed stick-shift and a Torsen limited-slip differential while stronger stopping power comes from bigger discs and calipers. Inside, it has beautiful sport bucket seats, a small and racy steering wheel, lots of red trim and GTi logos, and Peugeot's i-Cockpit touchscreen interface. Price: **POA**



9.

SsangYong Tivoli, Korando, Rodius

Say hello—again—to SsangYong. The fourth largest Korean automaker has found a new local distributor, Berjaya Auto Philippines. Taking advantage of the Philippines's fast-growing automotive industry as well as the recently passed ASEAN-Korea Free Trade Agreement or AKFTA, SsangYong is confident of providing an innovative and reliable alternative to the usual offerings in the country. SsangYong will rely on its all-wheel drive and diesel engineering credentials to set it apart from the competition. Globally, it has positioned itself by making advances in eco-friendly diesel technology employing Euro-4 common-rail direct-injection engines to their vehicles. SsangYong Philippines will offer three vehicles initially (thankfully losing the previous quirky styling and now with more mainstream designs): the Tivoli, a handsome subcompact crossover; the Korando, a compact crossover; and the Rodius, a spacious MPV. Price: **P785,000 to P1,590,000**

10.

Subaru Forester

Motor Image Pilipinas is celebrating its 10th year in the country in style by refreshing its most important product: the Forester. Already the bestselling all-wheel drive crossover in the country (and at one point, the bestselling crossover, period), the Forester gets a slew of aesthetic and mechanical changes to make it more premium than ever before. Outside, it gets new swiveling LED headlights along with new bumpers, grille, tail lights, and alloy wheels. Inside, there are more luxury touches thanks to more piano black accents, the addition of powered seats for the front occupants, and many more. Though the engine and transmission options haven't changed, the 2016 model gets a retuned suspension for a softer ride, more sound deadening for less outside noise, a quicker ratio steering for better handling, and in the case of the XT, a brake-based Active Torque Vectoring system. Price: **P1,448,000 to P1,918,000** ©

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Petron made headlines in June 2015 when it became the first oil company to locally produce a full line-up of gasoline variants that meet Euro-4 standards, six months ahead of the government mandate to make available Euro-4 fuels by January this year. Motorists also welcomed the Company's move to introduce Euro-4 standard diesel last October 2015.

As of 01 January 2016, all fuels sold in the Philippines are required to meet the Philippine Euro-4 standard that sets

the allowable sulfur content for gasoline and diesel fuels at 50-parts per million (ppm). With this Clean Air initiative, local fuels are expected to be 10-times cleaner than the previous Euro-2 fuels which had up to 500-ppm sulfur content.

Petron Euro-4 Tri-Activ fuels are significantly more environment-friendly. They keep your engine clean and efficient because they have lesser tendencies to form carbon deposits that can clog injectors.

Even vehicles with Euro-2 engines can benefit from Petron's Euro-4 Tri-Activ fuels, which with their advanced detergent, combustion improver, and friction modifier additives. With these performance benefits, all vehicle types can contribute to a cleaner environment. At the same time, vehicle owners will definitely appreciate savings from improved mileage and lower maintenance costs.

Petron invested US\$2-billion to upgrade its Bataan Refinery and ensure the reliable production of more environment-friendly and premium fuels. It also operates a fuel additives blending plant in Subic Bay, in partnership with leading global fuel specialties company Innospec. With these capabilities, Petron is able to produce five Euro-4 fuel variants—the most extensive in the local oil industry—that meet the unique needs of motorists.





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SIX RIDES WE LOVED FROM THE 10TH IR BIKE FEST

THIS MONTH, WE'RE featuring cars galore from the 2016 Manila International Auto Show. But it wouldn't be a complete motoring suite if we didn't have motorcycles, would it? Last April, the two-wheeled world held its biggest event of the year—the 10th annual Inside Racing Bike Festival and Tradeshow. The event was packed with riders, bike enthusiasts, and surprise performances and appearances by the country's top personalities, such as Daniel Padilla, Richard Gutierrez, and Hale, among others. Here's a quick primer to the bikes and performances that stole the show at the event:



Honda CB150R Streetfire

Honda unleashed its newest backbone model at the 10th IR Bike Festival—the CB150R Streetfire. This new sports-bike features a liquid-cooled, 4-stroke, DOHC-4 valve engine that boasts of Engine Technology Performance. Blazing through the competition, the CB150R Streetfire has an acceleration capacity of 12.4kw/9000rpm with 13.8Nm/7000rpm. For easier start-ups, the bike is equipped with a convenient kick/electric starting system.



RGutz – Wheeltek Racing Team

Wheeltek presented motor-ing's newest racing team to beat this coming 2016 Philippine Superbike Championships. The stage was graced by the team owner himself—celebrity and motor-cycle aficionado, Richard Gutierrez. The team's top rider, Raniel Resuello, was also at the event. The team showcased their new Kawasaki Ninja ZX10-R racebikes.



Kymco Super Z 125

Kymco released their new lineup for 2016. Here's a preview of their affordable Super Z 125. The unveiling was serenaded by one of the country's top acts and the brand's new endorsers, Hale. With the new lineup, Kymco Philippines once again proves to be "swak sa budget." The Super Z 125 will be available this year.



Suzuki GSX Concept

Suzuki gave us a look into the future. Carrying the name of their most powerful high performance bikes, the GSX Concept showed what it means to be part of the Suzuki brand. The GSX Series featured the GSX-R1000, Hayabusa, and the GSXS1000. Suzuki's brief glimpse into its future also anticipates their 100th anniversary in 2020. In preparation, they're already started building the future of mobility for everyone.



TVS Apache RTR 200 4V

India shows that it's still alive in the motoring world. The TVS Motor Company launched their much-awaited Apache RTR 200 4V bike. Powered by an advanced four-valve racing O3C oil-cooled oversquare, five-speed engine, the Apache whips up an impressive 21ps/9000rpm and 17.5Nm/7000 of torque. The aggressively-designed bike boasts that it can from 0-60 in a mere 3.9 seconds.



Yamaha YXZ1000R

Who says motorcycling festivals are just for two-wheelers? In their expansive Rev Hall, Yamaha showcased everything but the kitchen sink. We saw their lineup of two-wheelers, like the Mion, the N-Max, and the Super Tenere. We also saw their three-wheeled Tricity. What stole the show, however, came in glorious four wheels. For the first time on display in the Philippines, Yamaha's Utility Task Vehicle (UTV), the YXZ1000R showed that Yamaha's prowess comes in all shapes and sizes. 🏍️

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At the heart of the image



SUZUKI CIAZ TAKES ON THE BIG BOYS



With the new Suzuki Ciaz (L-R): Norminio Mojica, managing director, Suzuki Philippines; Minoru Amano, division general manager, Asia Automobile Department, Suzuki Motor Corporation; Kennosuke Ouchi, ASEAN/OCEANIA Marketing Group, Suzuki Motor Corporation; Shuzo Hoshikura, general manager for Automobile, Suzuki Philippines

MINICAR SPECIALIST SUZUKI is moving up a weight class by taking on the big boys with its entry in the most competitive segment in the local car industry, the subcompact class. With over a dozen players from Japan, Korea, America, France, Germany, China, and India—led by the country's bestselling car, the Toyota Vios—subcompacts make up the majority of vehicle sales in the Philippines.

After waging war in the likewise competitive supermini class with its Alto and Celerio hatchbacks (and achieving impressive success)—Suzuki is wading into battle in the next higher segment.

The Ciaz comes in three model variants: the P738,000 GL Manual, the P773,000 GL Automatic, and the top-of-the-line P888,000 GLX Automatic.

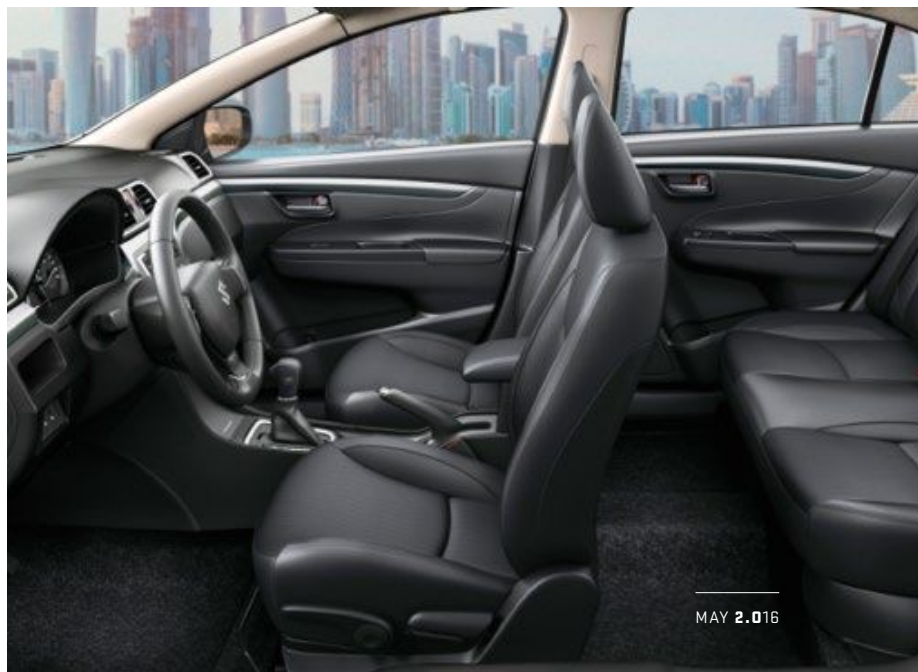
Suzuki says that “Ciaz” stands for “City from A to Z,” capturing the essence of Asia's fast-growing urban landscape. Suzuki claims that the Ciaz offers best-in-class fuel efficiency as well as other advanced features coupled with a sporty, elegant exterior design and spacious, refined interiors.

Size-wise, the Ciaz measures a tad more than three inches longer than the benchmark Vios. The Suzuki is also an inch wider with the same height and rests on a 100mm-longer wheelbase.

Power comes from the Suzuki Ertiga's K14B 1.4-liter DOHC 16-valve inline-4 engine with variable valve timing (VVT) developing 92hp at 6,000rpm and 130Nm at 4,000rpm. The motor is mated to either a five-speed manual or a four-speed automatic, both also derived from the Ertiga, the latter gearbox sharing the Ertiga's fuel-saving transmission technology.

Suspension is via struts up front and a torsion beam axle at the rear. Brakes are front discs and rear drums. Anti-lock Braking System (ABS) is also in place, preventing the brakes from locking during sudden heavy or panic braking while Electronic Brakeforce Distribution (EBD) distributes braking force efficiently between the front and rear wheels to further prevent lockups and loss of control. Tires are 185/65-15 for the GL and 195/55-16 for the GLX. Steering is via electric power assist.

The Ciaz also comes with a variety of advanced features that once were only available in high-end luxury cars like a





multimedia integrated audio unit with an Android touchscreen and six speakers for the GLX (complete with Bluetooth and USB connectivity as well as mirror link capability for tablets and smartphones). This innovative multimedia infotainment system comes with preloaded applications such as YouTube, Gmail, Facebook, and the Filipino driver's go-to app, Waze. GL models have a four-speaker touchscreen audio system with navigation.

Audio and hands-free connectivity control switches are also found on the steering wheel, facilitating easy access to various tasks. Add these to the keyless push-start system and remote, and the Ciaz delivers a hassle-free driving experience for busy urbanites.

Bridging the gap between Suzuki's compact models and standard sedans, the Ciaz combines the best of both worlds: great fuel efficiency and ample space. This subcompact sedan has bigger door openings and a generous 1,730mm width and 2,650mm wheelbase, enabling easier ingress

and egress as well as increasing the amount of rear seat legroom, headroom, and shoulder room. The GLX comes with handsome black leather seats.

Matching the cavernous interior is the equally spacious trunk, which has a luggage capacity of 495 liters, and can be closed with an electromagnetic latch and features a convenient boot light.

At the core of the Suzuki Ciaz is the patented Total Effective Control Technology (TECT), which boosts driver and passenger protection through a light yet incredibly strong impact-absorption system.

Other safety and security features include dual front airbags, ELR seatbelts with pre-tensioners and force-limiters, side-impact beams, and a keyless entry system with engine immobilizer.

The new Ciaz comes in Pearl Snow White, Metallic Star Silver, Metallic Mineral Gray, Pearl Super Black, and Prime Dignity Brown. Expect a test drive soon. ☉

SCOSCHE OUTS NEW CAR-FRIENDLY ACCESSORIES



BEING STUCK IN traffic, which is sadly a regular thing our city, means you'll need to keep yourself busy while on the road. But you can't just keep reaching for your mobile device while driving; that isn't particularly safe. That's where car mounts come in. You would need a sturdy one though and that's where the likes of Scosche are vying for your attention.

The brand just unveiled its new line of car accessories to suit whatever requirement you might need and we've chosen a few of our favorites here. Their mounts make use of a high-powered magnetic system made out of neodymium magnets. Scosche's International Business Development Head Sufiya Cheung promises these magnets are safe for your devices and they're designed to work with most devices out on the market. Except don't use these for hard drive-based devices like the iPod classic and iPod video or for those that use Qi Wireless Charging.

One of the new products is the magicMOUNT Pro line, which is available in three variants: Vent (P1,495), Window/Dash (P1,895), and Dash (P1,495). The great thing about these is you can even take them from the car and bring them with you when you travel serving as a phone stand or use it at home or in the office. You can place your smartphone or tablet vertically or horizontally, depending on your need for it.

Scosche also has the magicMOUNT Mini Mat (P1,495) that attaches easily to car dashboards or any flat surface; the magicMOUNT Power, a magnetic power mount that lets you charge mobile devices via two 12-watt Fast Charge USB ports; the magicMOUNT Rear Seat Headrest (P1,995) to keep your backseat passengers occupied on trips; and the magicMOUNT Window (P1,295), which easily attaches to your windshield mount without impeding your vision.

You can check out Scosche's products at various gadget accessory stores like Astroplus, Beyond the Box, Data Link, Digital Walker, Mobile 1, ROX, Samsung, SM Department Store, Urban Gadgets, to name a few. Digits Trading Corporation exclusively distributes these products in the country. ☎

HYUNDAI INTRODUCES INDUSTRY-FIRST 5-YEAR UNLIMITED MILEAGE WARRANTY



HYUNDAI ASIA RESOURCES, INC. (HARI), the official distributor of Hyundai automobiles in the Philippines, once again pushes boundaries when it comes to giving Filipinos the most brilliant motoring experience possible.

In 2007, HARI redefined the standard of after-sales and warranty coverage when it introduced the 5-Year Warranty—which broke the boundaries of the usual 3-Year Warranty offered by most brands.

Fast forward to 2015, HARI went on to surpass its own warranty program by launching another industry first: the 5-Year Warranty program with Unlimited Mileage coverage.

Hyundai owners can now drive all they want without fear of losing the after-sales security within their warranty period on account of excessive mileage because the previous 100,000-kilometer cap on the warranty clause has been removed.

Under HARI's 5-Year Unlimited Mileage Warranty program, items such as the car's electronics or components related to electrical systems, powertrain, DCT (dual clutch transmission), and body and paint are covered for five years with unlimited kilometers. Car batteries are covered for two years (24 months) or 40,000km; audio system: two years (24 months) or 50,000km; and suspension system: five years or 100,000km. Parts warranty coverage is also included for one year (12 months) or 20,000km.

Moreover, with the additional two years, customers get huge savings on costs incurred for parts replacement on the fourth and fifth years of

car ownership. For parts or components that tend to break down during the said period, the 5-Year Unlimited Mileage Warranty covers replacement costs. Coverage however is granted if the owner strictly adheres to the provisions of the warranty program, especially those stipulated for regular Preventive Maintenance Service (PMS) check-up and use of Hyundai Genuine Parts.

Backed by support from HARI's 40-strong nationwide dealership network that offers comprehensive after-sales, genuine parts, and customer relationship assistance at every strategic location, you're guaranteed to receive Hyundai's signature care right where you are.

The 5-Year Unlimited Mileage Warranty program covers all Hyundai cars bought from an authorized Hyundai dealer from December 1, 2015 onwards. Visit a Hyundai dealer near you to know more about the 5-year Unlimited Mileage Warranty. ☎



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KIA UNVEILS ALL-NEW, 4TH-GEN SPORTAGE



IT'S EASY TO see the Teutonic inspirations that spring from the pen of Peter Schreyer, the German design chief of Kia since 2006 (and now also of Hyundai). He came to Kia by way of Audi and Volkswagen, which is why you see his trademark thick D-pillars that you see on the VW Golf on the Kia Rio hatchback and on the previous-generation Sportage.

You'll still see that thick D-pillar on the latest all-new Sportage, but what you'll also be intrigued—and perhaps

delighted—to see is an uncanny resemblance of the front end to that of another VW sister brand, Porsche. If you look closely at the front end of the Sportage—from its scalloped hood with its distinctive longitudinal “ribs” to its mean-looking quad headlamps to its gaping front air intake (which still sports Kia’s signature “Tiger nose”)—you’ll notice that it looks uncannily like a Porsche Macan. Nonetheless, it’s a resemblance that surely no prospective Sportage buyer will object to. (The new Sportage received Germany’s prestigious 2016 Red Dot Award for Product Design.)

After its world debut at the Frankfurt Motor Show last September, the all-new Sportage lands on Philippine shores in three variants: the P1,445,000 EX 2WD, the P1,595,000 EX AWD, and the P1,795,000 flagship GT-Line AWD. The Sportages that will be initially offered in the Philippines are powered by a 2.0-liter inline-4 e-VGT CRDi DOHC Euro 4 diesel engine.

Kia’s European design studio in Frankfurt led the 4th-generation Sportage’s powerful, new form.



The headlamps are now positioned higher, sweeping back along the outer edges of the sharply-detailed hood and a lower, wider grille adds more volume to the lower half of the vehicle's façade. The beautifully designed headlamps with circular DRLs and fog lamps with chrome aeroblades add to the Sportage's sporty appeal while the sophisticated design of the LED rear combination lamps and the horizontal chrome bar further add an upmarket feel.

The re-profiled undercover and the newly designed bumper also make this the most aerodynamic Sportage to date. Straight, flowing character lines stretching across the body and the coupé-like roof, the rear underbody diffuser, and the rear spoiler side garnish all combine to reduce drag and enhance aerodynamic performance.

The all-new Sportage's cabin boasts of a far greater proportion of soft-touch, high-grade materials and the use of cloth, leather, and designer stitching compared to the previous generations. There is increased headroom and legroom as well as improved support, posture, and vibration of seats. Cargo space is up from 465 liters to 503 liters.

A new GT Line variant adds a different kind of flair and performance to the Sportage. GT Line models feature satin chrome moldings on the radiator grille, aero blade, tailgate, side sill, and window-surround moldings, giving the Sportage

a more upscale appearance. New "ice-cube" LED fog lamps, aluminum-effect skid plates, and biggest-in-class 19-inch alloy wheels also give a more aggressive look, while its dual-tip exhaust tailpipes and metal-effect rear underbody add an even sportier appeal.

Several differentiating interior elements such as D-shaped leather steering wheel, piano-black fascia, aluminum pedals, and paddle shifters underline the Kia Sportage GT Line's luxurious and sporting aspirations.

Performance-wise, GT Line models feature a tuned suspension to provide sharper handling and firmer ride without sacrificing comfort. Ⓢ



Baselworld 2016

BASEL ON MY MIND

BASEL, SWITZERLAND—Four years in, I still get a kick from going around Baselworld, the largest and most important watch and jewelry fair in the world. Held annually during the cusp of spring, all 141,000 square meters of the exhibition site is always awash in a sea of black- and gray-suited journalists and buyers rushing from one watch booth to another. This year, while the somber sea rather matched the somber mood at the fair—largely due to the economic downturn and general uncertainty—Baselworld still presented a batch of very interesting timepieces. Here are a few of them.



LOVE IT OR LEAVE IT

Corum Bubble

Normally new watch models are presented to journalists in a press room, but this time, press were brought to the Bubble Room. With 30 new models, it's definitely all about the Bubble over at Corum this year. Launched in the year 2000, the Bubble has become an iconic watch for the brand, with its domed crystal distorting the view of the dial. This optical distortion actually lends itself to a plethora of design options, as seen in the limited edition pieces featuring abstract and psychedelic nudes by French photographer [Dani Olivier](#). There is also a *Star Wars*-inspired piece, a disco ball, and a series of gaming-inspired ones. And to show that it's not all about form, Bubble also has two complicated models. The Bubble Tourbillon has a tourbillon, obviously, a second time zone, day/night indicator, date, and the hours and minutes. The Bubble Tourbillon Chronograph has a tourbillon, chronograph, small seconds, and the hours and minutes.

The quirky dome is no easy feat either, lest you think that it's easy to pull off a Bubble-type watch. A flawless block of sapphire crystal is ground into its characteristic dome shape, before it is exquisitely polished, ensuring total clarity, and consistent thickness and curvature throughout.

The Bubble is one of those watches that can polarize the watch crowd. Either you love it, or you hate it. Either way, it's sure to get a strong reaction.

CORUM HERITAGE BUBBLE TOURBILLON CHRONOGRAPH

Aside from the distinctive dome, this watch also has snazzy black ruthenium-treated bridges and main plates seen through the dome and the sapphire caseback. It's enclosed in a 47mm-wide 18K rose gold case, and comes up to 21mm high. It's an automatic watch with a CO398 movement, and a power reserve of 45 hours.



STARTING ON A SURE THING

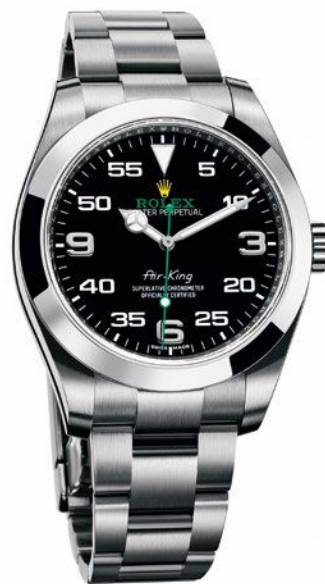
Rolex Air-King

A Rolex is a Rolex is a Rolex, which means that a Rolex is almost always a good buy, no matter what model. The re-issued Air-King, at CHF 5,900, is almost as low as a Rolex can get and a good step into the world where Rolex is always king. The dial of this one, though, may have a few detractors.

So what's the deal with the dial? You have the big gold applied Arabic numerals at 3, 6, and 9 and smaller white transferred numerals for the 5-minute markers. The quarter numerals are a nod to early models of the Air King, and the rest are directly inspired by the cockpit instruments Rolex developed for the Bloodhound SSC land speed record project. Then you have the Green and yellow logo, and "Air-King" in the same font as the '50s model. Next are "Oyster Perpetual"—which relays the watch's waterproofness—"Superlative Chronometer" (Rolex's guarantee), and "Officially Certified" (the COSC guarantee). It seems like a lot of information has been crammed on the dial and it looks too busy. It also seems like a departure from the usual discreet Rolex dial, but it grows on you. And that could be a good thing, given that the new Air-King seems targeted at the younger crowd.

ROLEX OYSTER PERPETUAL AIR-KING

The new Air-King is also much bigger in its 40mm 904L steel Oyster case. It comes with an upgraded movement, the caliber 3131, that uses a blue Parachrom hairspring, which is impervious to magnetism (the case, too, has an internal magnetic shield) and less sensitive to shocks. The 3131 is self-winding with a perpetual rotor and a 48-hour power reserve.



ALL THE TIME IN THE WORLD

Patek Philippe World Time Chronograph Ref. 5930

Patek Philippe did the unexpected at BaselWorld when it didn't present any spectacular anniversary pieces for the Nautilus (40 years) or Annual Calendar (20 years). It did however, drastically revamp another important watch—the World Timer. In the new model, Patek combined two complications—world time and chronograph. And what's great about it, aside from the gorgeous blue guilloché dial, is that it's easy to read and operate. Twenty-four time zones are represented by different cities on the city ring. The hour and minutes hands tell the time in the city/time zone at 12 o'clock, and the time in the other time zones can be read off the city ring and the 24-hour ring (which is conveniently colored so you know whether it's night or day in a particular time zone). To change the home time, just press the button at 10 o'clock.

The chronograph—the indicator of which has been classily integrated into the dial—can also be manipulated easily. It can measure time from one-eighth of a second to 30 minutes. It's also a flyback, meaning that the chrono hand zeroes and restarts automatically when the button at 4 o'clock is pressed; the button at 2 o'clock starts and stops the chronograph.

PATEK PHILIPPE WORLD TIME CHRONOGRAPH REF. 5930

The watch measures only 39.5mm across and 12.86mm high—pretty compact for the complications it encloses

in its 18K white gold case. The movement, while based on a previous world time caliber, is the all-new CH 28-520 HU, which has a 55-hour power reserve.





HAUTLENCE LABYRINTH

The Labyrinth comes in a hefty 43.5 x 37 x 13mm titanium case, and the maze is of solid 18K rose or white gold. You can see the mechanism via the sapphire caseback. Only 18 of each model will be made.

THAT'S A WATCH?!

Hautlence Labyrinth

Actually, it isn't. It's an old school game you can strap on to your wrist, but it's too outrageous not to mention. Hautlence is one of these hip independent watch houses, and is known for quirky watches that tell time in unusual ways. The Labyrinth, however, simply doesn't tell time. Rather, it's for "stopping time"—in as much as time can stop while you revert to childhood playtime, albeit with a \$12,000 USD toy. The guys at Hautlence do acknowledge the frivolity of the Labyrinth, calling it "a useless yet entirely essential object." This piece is the first in the brand's Playground collection, which is supposed to disconnect you from this increasingly connected world.

The Labyrinth works pretty much the same way your ball maze games did—whether you had the nice wooden ones, or the cheap plastic ones with flimsy, poorly printed cartoon-printed cardboard play surface—you have a ball, and you need to get it into a hole. There is some mechanical wizardry involved, however. The crown activates a mechanical lift, bringing the gold (or platinum) ball back up to the play surface (should you manage to tilt your ball around the maze and into a hole). ☺

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SPECIAL MOM'S DAY TREATS



4.

1.

Dress her up

Why not add a special piece to her wardrobe to make her feel like the beautiful, stylish woman you know her to be. Check out the ZALORA Collection Sleeveless Shift Dress from the Manila Fashion Festival (P1,299) or this Long Silk Dress (P6,990) from the H&M Conscious Exclusive 2016 Collection.

2.

Get some time away

Take mom away from where she doesn't have to think about work, errands, or anything that can stress her out. If you want to get away from the city, there's the lovely Siam Hotel in Sorsogon City. But if you want to staycation, instead of staying at the usual hotels, why not try Airbnb? There's this lovely two bedroom suite in Rockwell (search for "Luxury Rockwell Edades 2 BR Suites" on the site hosted by Leny) for P7,990 a night.



1.

IT'S BUT RIGHT the important woman in your life gets a wonderful surprise on her special day. Here are some gift ideas for your beloved mom on Mother's Day:



3.

3.

Pamper her

A woman loves her beauty products—everything from the cheap thrills to the luxurious products that are forever a part of her beauty arsenal—so why not get her some of her favorites or introduce her to new products? There's the ultra-luxurious La Mer Crème De La Mer Moisturizing Cream (P21,400). Or if that's way over budget, you can check out the new Maybelline Color Show Big Apple Red Collection that comes in five red shades and only costs P165 each.

4.

Bond over a meal

What about just going out for a nice Mother's Day meal? You can go for a yummy and healthy brunch at The Gardens located at The Grove Retail Row in Pasig. Have a no-fuss Latin feast at Gringo at SM North EDSA The Block. ☺



1. Sports

Stay fit and active with sports

Stay active by wearing comfortable sportswear pieces such as UNIQLO's AIRism products. AIRism fibers incorporate an anti-odor function to keep the wearer fresh even in the most humid conditions. Its design provides greater stretch and ease of movement for particularly active people.

2. Shopping

Keep the comfort on your week-end day out

UNIQLO allows one to be cool and relaxed on a weekend day out with its sleeveless Linen tops and 100 percent cotton shirts. Matched with equally comfortable jogger pants, one can freely run from one shopping mall to another.

UNIQLO CARES FOR YOUR COMFORT WITH 2016 SUMMER COLLECTION

SUMMER CLOTHING SHOULD be all about comfort and breathability. This particular summer heat seems to be especially unforgiving, too. UNIQLO has some stylish solutions for you with its 2016 Summer Collection. Whether you're hitting the beach, staycationing, working out, or just plain working, there's something from the Japanese brand for you.



4. Work

Drop the boring office style

Beat the heat and veer away from unsightly sweat marks with UNIQLO's Polo shirt line that has a distinctive DRY technology that dries sweat quickly and suppresses odor. It's made with stretch material that gives you extra comfort and more room to move, enabling these items to keep up with your on-the-go lifestyles. ☺

3. Beach

Get the laid-back beach vibe

UNIQLO's offerings are created to match the needs of anyone who wants to cool down while under the sun. Whether it's a Linen shirt made of 100 percent French linen or a Polo shirt made with lightweight materials, UNIQLO new offerings can make your summer cool and breathable. To achieve that effortless laid-back look, roll up the sleeves and pair it with UNIQLO Short Pants.



Welcoming the new faces of UNIQLO

Aside from introducing its new line for the season, UNIQLO also introduced four new brand ambassadors who are all at the top of their games: renowned industrial designer Kenneth Cobonpue, director/screenwriter Antoinette Jadaone, superstar Lea Salonga, and fashion photographer BJ Pascual. Lea and BJ were present at the Summer Collection launch to promote the wonders of UNIQLO's new line and how these help keep them looking stylish yet comfortable despite the Manila heat.

FIVE SNEAKER COLLABS YOU NEED IN YOUR LIFE

THE USUAL JEANS and-t-shirt combo may be deceptively simple but can actually be a well put-together outfit of awesomeness. Take your cue from your favorite celebrities who spice up their style from the bottom up—through their sneakers. • Sneaker collaborations between our favorite brands and our favorite celebrities bring two big names into one great shoe. Wearing these, your subtle message is: Here I am in sensible (and ultra-comfy!) shoes that packs style and speaks of my sensibilities. •• In no particular order, here are five of our picks on the best sneaker collabs you should have on your shoe rack.



adidas Originals + Pharrell Williams Supershell

Supershell is a sneaker that's outwardly simple, but with an artistic surprise. Check out the sneaker's toe cap. It's been made into a canvass that expresses boundless creativity. Pharrell Williams's collaboration with some of the world's creative minds will make you stand out from the crowd—New York City contemporary artist Todd James, U.S. photographer and director Cass Bird, Japanese contemporary artist Mr., and British-Iraqi architect Zaha Hadid. The artworks pop in each sneaker as these are set in black and white and neutral colors.



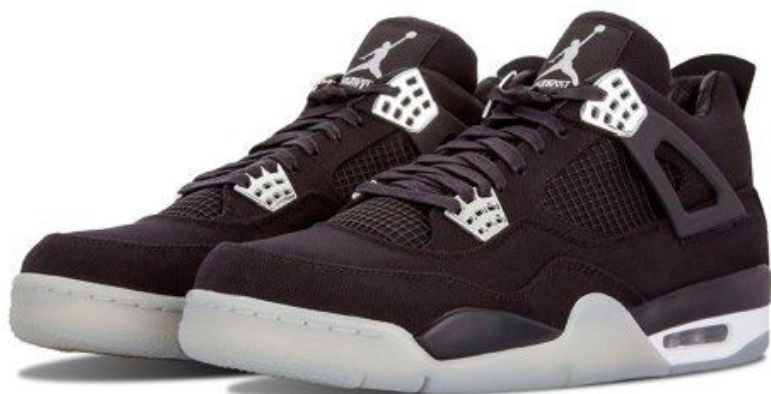
Reebok + Kendrick Lamar Ventilator

The Ventilator is not just Kendrick Lamar's contribution to sneaker culture; it's also a testament to the music artist's call to peaceful co-existence by the rival gangs in his hometown of Compton, California. The design is distinctly clean, with its creamy white upper. On each tongue, the word "neutral" is written, which is consistent with its message of peace. The message is reinforced and made stronger by the "red" and "blue" mark on the left and right heels. Laces can be either rope or flat. With a sneaker that's more than a sneaker, it's no wonder that this pair is an instant hit.



Puma + Rihanna **Puma Fenty Trainer**

Here's a shoe from Rihanna, whose real name is Robyn Rihanna Fenty, which is well-loved for its fashion-forward style combined with sheer functionality: the Puma Fenty Trainer. Those in the know about sneaker culture will instantly recognize that you're wearing a Fenty with its most distinguishing feature: an extra high tongue, which channels Rihanna's edgy vibe. Build-wise, the Fenty spells comfort as it's made of Ariaprene, which is neoprene made more high tech with its breathable mesh upper. There are perforated plastic overlays at the sides for support. Further upping the cool factor are the Puma logo located midfoot and the Puma by Rihanna logo at the heel tab. The Fenty is laceless and comes in black, white, and red.



Nike + Nicki Minaj **Pink Print**

"When you're a girl but your custom #PinkprintJORDANS are about to sh*t on every male rapper who's ever stepped FOOT in the sneaker game!!!! This is just a TASTE of the secret that's about to be revealed!!!!!" - declared the rapper Nicki Minaj on Instagram early in 2015. And that was how the Jordan Westbrook O was given a new look—an awesome collaboration between the Jordan Classic team and Nicki Minaj. As the name implies, this is a pair of very pink sneakers, which befits the queen of pink. The ultra-feminine color is accented by a metallic silver base, while the soles are colored blue and purple ombre. Finishing it off are ultra-cute metal-tipped pink laces.

Nike + Eminem **Air Jordan IV**

The Air Jordan IV is a pair of black canvas sneakers with silver accents—but it's not as simple as that. For starters, the upper is made from the famous Carhartt canvas material. Touches of Eminem can be seen in various parts of this pair, such as the Eminem and Shady Records graphics at the upper, the iconic Jumpman logo at the tongue, and the ShadyXV logo just below it. Last but not least is the heel, which contains the hockey mask and backwards "E" logo, which are Eminem's trademark. But that's not all. What we like about the Air Jordan IV is the utter exclusivity. Only 10 pairs were put on eBay on auction. You can guess how pricey each pair costs! But the price, we suppose, was well worth it, as this was especially produced to as a way of raising funds for Michigan State's Literacy Through Songwriting Program. ☉



THE PRESIDENTIAL TRADITION OF THE FIRST 100 DAYS

IN DAVID SIPRESS'S March 5th cartoon in *The New Yorker* magazine, one of the Founding Fathers reminded his colleagues drafting the U.S. Constitution. "Don't forget—we decided to add penis size to the lists of qualifications for President." This was a humorous reference to candidate Donald Trump's ribald reference to his anatomical superiority over the Republican field that I just couldn't resist starting this piece with. Begging your indulgence here.

Of course, the arbitrary qualifications for office have never been a guarantee of solid effective leadership in any country as we have learned from history. These are just the bare minimum to prevent any nutcase from assuming the reins of power. But seriously, once a candidate has won, there are tremendous expectations generated between V-Day and Inauguration Day.

It's now accepted as the time when a President-Elect is given a honeymoon with the usual critics—the political opposition, the media, and key sectors like business and the Church—right after proclamation. For the opposition, it's a period when they are willing to give the new boy, or girl, the benefit of the doubt. For the media, it's the season of curiosity and amusement as with a new baby in the house. Simply put, this is the crawling stage for any new administration.

We can also think of the period as the "Look how far we've come" phase of the administration and of its spokesman, if he or she has survived 'til then. The goal of the 100-day retrospective is to evaluate the new leaders given enough time to get their feet wet in statecraft and before they've solidified their legacy for good or ill. Let's not discount the possibility that presidents can get a surprising amount done in their first three months at the palace.

While it isn't a perfect gauge for the potential of a new President's "Executive Effectiveness," it's the only one we have so far. Presidents are normally most effective when new in office, when the mystique and majesty of triumph is still awesome, and when Congress is still malleable to his agenda. The number has nothing mystical about it, as many presidential aides have complained that it's an arbitrary yardstick of success that puts pressure on them. Nevertheless, it has been the measure of presidential activism and effectiveness by scholars, the public, and media since Franklin D. Roosevelt (FDR) introduced the concept during the dark days of 1933.

In reality, the phrase "The One Hundred Days" goes back to Napoleon Bonaparte. That's the length of time

it took him to escape from Elba, re-establish himself as ruler of France in the Tuilleries, and battle the English and Prussian armies before his final defeat at the Battle of Waterloo. The American tradition only started with FDR

more than a century later. Entering into office in the face of the Great Depression, the Homeric scale and magnitude of FDR's New Deal legislative agenda—15 major bills passed by the U.S. Congress in FDR's first 100 days—was widely seen then as an unprecedented achievement.

Roosevelt was a presidential phenomenon. His responsive, take-charge style of governing was exactly what a dispirited and Depression-weary republic wanted in 1933. With FDR's inaugural phrase, "The only thing we have to fear is fear itself," he swiftly set a bright, infectious tone of optimism. "Where there were hesitation and vacillation, weighing always the personal political consequences, feebleness, timidity, and duplicity, there are now courage and boldness and real action," admitted California Republican Senator Hiram Johnson.

John F. Kennedy's (JFK) masterly handling of the Cuban missile crisis compensated for a number of disasters like the Bay of Pigs and teething pains like Russia's first-man-in-space achievement during his first 100 days. While Richard Nixon's presidency started off swimmingly, he did away with the 100-days assessment. In 1969, told the *New York Times* that he wanted to be weighed over the long term. In hindsight, that didn't turn out too well for him.

Ronald Reagan beat Roosevelt's 24-hour effectiveness record when the 52 U.S. diplomats held hostage by Iranian militants for 444 days were released on Jan. 20, 1981—the day of his Inauguration. Because of errors in presidential management staff structuring, President Bill Clinton spent his first 100 days bouncing from blunder to blunder such as an unsuccessful Attorney General nomination and Hillary Clinton's failed healthcare reform.

One hundred days is really a small period in Presidential Time because most administrations don't achieve or suffer their milestones, achievements, and scandals until later. Harry S. Truman's decision to use the atomic bombs, Watergate, and 9/11 terrorist attacks all happened beyond the 100-day marker.

In the Philippines, Presidents plotted policies in the Inaugural Address and charted legislative agendas in the State of the Nation Address. Until the Third Philippine Republic (July 4, 1946 to September 21, 1972), Presidents were sworn in on Rizal Day and delivered the State of Nation Address in January when Congress assembled. These two speeches within a period of a few weeks set the tone for the new Chief Executive's manner of governing.

President Corazon C. Aquino introduced the First 100 Days tradition in the country. On February 3, 1986, Candidate

Aquino delivered a campaign speech before the Joint Philippine Chambers of Commerce that described what her government will attempt to achieve in its first 100 days. And on June 4, 1986, President Aquino delivered a report to the nation on television. President Fidel V. Ramos, restored the Third Republic tradition when he listed his policies in the June 1992 Inaugural Address and elaborated on his legislative agenda in the January 1993 State of the Nation Address. President Joseph Ejercito Estrada, at the very least, heard of the First 100 Days tradition in the *Pa-morningan* sessions.

All in all, 100 days are really too short to evaluate a new President. At best, it gives stakeholders a sensing of what his or her governing style will be and how it animates the nation or not. There are two factors that matters in giving the electorate a thumbnail indication of what the First 100 Days will be like:

FIRST, A DECISIVE mandate will definitely give the new leader a strong hand in fulfilling his campaign promises on policies and agenda.

SECOND, IT'S CRITICAL for the voters to be aware of a candidate's cabinet choices and their caliber as early as the campaign period. This is the ideal, but we know that horse-trading with supporters get in the way during the period between proclamation and inauguration.

Finally, to avoid the Keystone Kops-like blundering of President Noyonoy Aquino's administration in its first month, the President-Elect must swiftly cast for talent and appoint a solid, competent presidential management team right after Proclamation. In this way, the new President can employ the First One Hundred Days as a period to stabilize a fledgling government and to unite a recently-divided nation behind him.

As we end this discussion on rulers, I suspect that the Founding Fathers really knew in the middle of their legs that not all rulers have 12 inches. ☉

Scuderia Ferrari Orologi

Spring/Summer 2016 Collection

PODIUM FINISHERS

THE SCUDERIA FERRARI OROLOGI'S new Spring/Summer 2016 Collection pays homage to Scuderia Ferrari's grand racing heritage and its Italian roots. It debuts two new lines that are sure to bring both the *Tifosi* and watch aficionados alike to its doors. • Inspired by the intricate details found on celebrated Scuderia Ferrari single-seaters, this watch brand's pieces incorporate materials such as solid stainless steel, scratch-resistant mineral crystals, and tough and colorful thermoplastic cases. Underneath it's powered by precise quartz and automatic engines, making that podium finish an absolute guarantee.

RedRev

Thrillseeker

Have race day excitement with you all the time with the RedRev collection. These three-hand timepieces come with a bold honeycomb texture inspired by the layered structure of a race car's monocoque and matte black or white dials.

The round 44mm case (P6,550) has an impact-resistant thermoplastic material with a polished finish that is reminiscent of a Ferrari dashboard. Adding some extra personality is its black ion-plated crown with an etched Prancing Horse, a new detailed multi-level dial with "rev counter" accent on the reflector ring, and an applied Scudetto at 3 o'clock.

At the pinnacle, the RedRev Evo (P19,750) is the representation of sportive sophistication. This high-performance watch comes with a 46mm case integrated with link bracelets fabricated in black or gunmetal gray ion-plated stainless steel. It's complemented by polished gold-toned and rose gold-toned elements, deep honeycomb texture, black or bright new metallic plate, date display, and cylindrical subdial rim detail. Other Scuderia Ferrari-inspired details include metallic hands, applied markers, and yellow Scudetto. It also has an angled reflector ring with a rev counter color-block detail and printed Arabic numerals placed like on a dashboard gauge.



RedRev 0830301
P6,550



RedRev Evo 0830304
P19,750

XX Kers

Turbo-charged timepieces

A successor to the bestselling Scuderia XX line, the XX Kers collection gets its name from the Ferrari's cutting-edge technology for recovering energy wasted in braking—Kinetic Energy Recovery System.

The XX Kers line (P9,750) has a 50mm case with extended sport lugs and crown protector. It's crafted in stainless steel with either bright/brushed or black ion-plated finish. Some of its race-inspired elements are seen on its fixed coin-edge bezel, which comes in red or black anodized aluminum, with its contrasting markers and Arabic numerals that use the font found on the nose of a fabled Ferrari single-seater. It has black carbon fiber-textured details with high contrast-colored makers and bold skeleton hands as well as a seconds hand shaped like a Scudetto.

The multi-function models (starts at P12,250) feature day/date/24-hour subdials that look like the Revolution dashboard gauges and air intake-inspired silicone straps debossed with the Scuderia Ferrari name (available in black or red). The straps are free-falling to allow for better fit.

The pole-sitter of the XX Kers line (P22,250) features a 54mm case with a round black carbon fiber-textured dial with three "gauges" that can report time in three different time zones. The first zone or home zone features a round analog subdial with Arabic numerals in the Ferrari font and its own crown located beside it at the 9 o'clock position. The smaller round analog subdial is zone 2 and can be controlled by the red crown near the 2 o'clock position. Zone 3 tells time or the date in a digital window that's shaped and positioned like the gear shift window on a Ferrari dashboard. It's controlled by a third crown at the 4:30 position. An applied yellow Racing Shield, skeleton hands, team red lettering, and a Scudetto-shaped counterbalance detail show strong Scuderia Ferrari sports character. Ⓢ



XX Kers 0830307
P9,750



XX Kers 0830311
P12,250

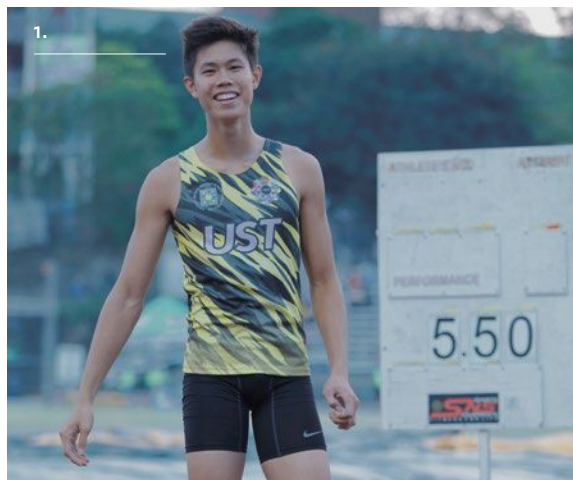


XX Kers 0830309
P14,750

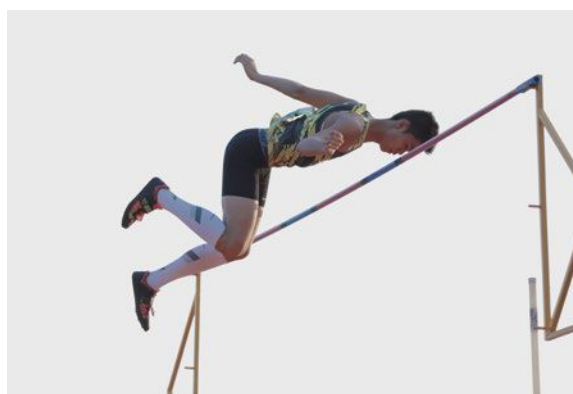


XX Kers 0830318
P22,250

SCUDERIA FERRARI WATCHES ARE AVAILABLE AT CHRONOS, SWISS GEAR, WRIST_POD, AND SELECTED SM DEPARTMENT STORES



PATAFA SUCCESSFULLY HOLDS ANNUAL ATHLETICS OPEN



THE PHILIPPINE ATHLETICS Track And Field Association (PATAFA), in partnership with L Timestudio and Asics Watch, recently held the 2016 Ayala Philippine National Open-Invitational Athletics Open on April 9 at Philsports Pasig. It was a great show of prowess and mettle from some of our outstanding athletes, showing how ready our Philippine athletics team is for upcoming international competitions.

EJ Obiena set a new Philippine record in men's pole vault as he jubilantly cleared the bar at 5.50m despite gusty winds in an apparent fortuitous indication of him meeting the 5.70m Olympic standard. Marestella Torres silenced her detractors with a thrilling 6.60m jump, just 10cm short of the Olympic criterion. Jessica Barnard, the bronze medalist for steeplechase at last year's SEA Games, won gold for the 800m dash. Caleb Stuart, Christopher Ulboc, and Rosie Villarito convincingly outclassed their competitors in the hammer throw, 3000m steeplechase, and javelin throw, respectively.

The Philippine Air Force 4x100m relay team led by Eric Cray briefly electrified the audience with their blistering performance that surpassed the existing Philippine record of 40.55s with their 40.54s clocking.

The performance, though, didn't make it to the record books as the team was eventually disqualified with the failure of team member Isidro del Prado Jr. to comply with the IAAF rule of succession by not reporting for his earlier 200m event.

At the end of the scorching three-day championships, thrower Bryan Jay Pacheco came out as the meet's male most outstanding athlete with golds in shot put and javelin throw. Karen Janario, on the other hand, was declared as the female most outstanding athlete with her two golds from the 100m hurdles and 4x100m relay, and two silvers from 100m and 200m. Newcomer Aries Toledo romped off with the "man of steel" special award in claiming the decathlon gold. It was the first decathlon competition Toledo has ever joined.

Team Air Force L Timestudio was declared the overall team champion in the senior's division, convincingly besting its closest competitor, the University of Santo Tomas, which wound up 1st runner-up ahead of the Philippine Army team, which placed third. In the junior's division, UST bagged the team championship, while the Far Eastern University and University of the Philippines came in second and third, respectively. 📌

TEAM POINTS

BOYS

| | | |
|---------------------------|------------------------|--------|
| Champion | Far Eastern University | 66 pts |
| 1 st Runner-up | Univ. of the East | 53 pts |
| 2 nd Runner-up | San Beda College | 49 pts |

GIRLS

| | | |
|---------------------------|------------------------|---------|
| Champion | Univ. of Santo Tomas | 144 pts |
| 1 st Runner-up | Far Eastern University | 47 pts |
| 2 nd Runner-up | Team Pasig | 44 pts |

MEN

| | | |
|---------------------------|------------------------|---------|
| Champion | Air Force L TIMESTUDIO | 119 pts |
| 1 st Runner-up | Univ. of Santo Tomas | 58 pts |
| 2 nd Runner-up | Philippine Army | 57 pts |

WOMEN

| | | |
|---------------------------|------------------------|--------|
| Champion | Univ. of Santo Tomas | 97 pts |
| 1 st Runner-up | Philippine Army | 74 pts |
| 2 nd Runner-up | Air Force L TIMESTUDIO | 43 pts |



SPECIAL AWARDS

| | BIB | NAME | TEAM | RESULT |
|---|------|----------------------------|------------------------|---------------|
| Most Outstanding Athlete (MOA) – Male | 5623 | Pacheco, Bryan Jay | Far Eastern University | 15.06, SP |
| Most Outstanding Athlete (MOA) – Female | 5816 | Janario, Karen | Univ. of Santo Tomas | 16.0, 100 MH |
| Fastest Man | 7500 | Abdul Manap, Badrul Hisyam | Malaysia | 10.39, -00.00 |
| Fastest Woman | 7613 | Pereira, Veronica Shanti | Singapore | 11.89, +01.50 |
| Man of Steel | 3697 | Toledo, Aries | Air Force L TIMESTUDIO | 6598 pts |



1. EJ Obiena
2. Marestella Torres
3. 4x100m Relay Team: Isidro del Prado, Jr., Edgardo Eljan, Brandon Thomas, Eric Cray
4. Eric Cray
5. Jessica Barnard
6. Team L TIMESTUDIO
7. Brandon Thomas, Caleb Staurt, Christopher Ulboc with L TIMESTUDIO's Judith Staples
8. Eric Cray & Donovan Arriolo Grant
9. Philippine Athletics Relay Team with L TIMESTUDIO's Judith Staples

THE SCIENCE OF SLEEP (AND WHY YOU NEED IT MORE)

FOR SOMETHING THAT we spend about $\frac{1}{3}$ of our lives doing (26 years give or take), we actually know very little about why we sleep. We know that sleeping helps us lead healthier lives, but we have yet to scratch to surface as to why sleep is necessary. Fortunately, sleep science has been making great strides in the last two decades to discover why sleep is really important.

Published in the journal *Science* in 2013, researchers from the University of Rochester Medical Center discovered what might be the first true reason why sleep matters. Many are aware that sleep has restorative properties, but their group observed that this is because sleep clears excess neural by-products that accumulate in our brain. Now, this sounds like something our body does on a regular basis, but that system doesn't actually extend to our brains. It was only through this study that scientists discovered that the brain has a similar mechanism. This is called the glymphatic system. Brain cells become smaller when we sleep; and this in turn allows cerebrospinal fluid to flow more freely between cells clearing out toxins. These toxic substances are linked to many neurodegenerative diseases such as Alzheimer's disease and Parkinson's disease. This was finally able to answer how sleep helps us at a molecular level.

Now that we know why sleep is important, what exactly are the ways sleep helps us function? A good night's rest is actually synonymous with several internal and mental health benefits. Anyone who has ever pulled an all-nighter knows that you feel much more scatterbrained the next day. You somehow feel like your brain isn't working at a hundred

percent. Well, that's because it isn't; parts of your brain become inactive even while you're awake when you're tired.

Sleep research has shown that enough sleep helps someone focus to perform tasks optimally and consolidates memory for better learning and recall. Lack of sleep also greatly affects your physical state. That heavy, unpleasant feeling you experience when you're tired is because your body was not able to fully repair itself. Sufficient sleep is necessary for your organs and muscles to recuperate. It's the reason why athletes have a strict sleeping schedule, and why it becomes that much harder to go to the gym when you haven't had a good night's rest. But how much is "enough" sleep really?

Many different studies have many different findings when it comes to the amount of sleep we actually need. While a good range for adults would be about 6-8 hours, it all really depends on how much sleep cycles you get in a night. A complete sleep cycle is about 90-110 minutes, and scientists recommended you get in about 3-4 sleep cycles in one night. Waking up at the wrong period in a cycle is also why sometimes you feel tired even after a decent amount of sleep.

With the fast-paced developments we experience today, a common mantra that we hear starting around college is "sleep is for the weak." It's actually rather ironic that lack of sleep weakens you to the point that it becomes hard to keep up with the rest of the world. So, find time to give your brain and body a good night's rest, and you might discover that you're able to enjoy even more things than you did before. ●



TANGHALANG ATENEO ENDS 37TH SEASON IN STYLE WITH HISTORICAL PLAY KALANTIAW



Art direction by Ed Lacson Jr.; Styling by Carlo Pagunaling; Photography by Christine Chung & Adrian Begonia

IT WAS A throwback to those college days when we were required to watch a school play for class. Watching Tanghalang Ateneo's season-ender *Kalantiaw* was a reminder that a play doesn't need seasoned performers, a grand stage, and an exorbitant ticket to be good.

Originally titled *Ang Kagila-gilalas na Kasinungalingan Tungkol sa Isang Kayumangling Bayan*, *Kalantiaw* was written by famed playwright Rene O. Villanueva. The Palanca First Prize-winning play was first performed at the Cultural Center of the

Philippines. After which, it was taken to Paris by Tanghalang Pilipino.

Kalantiaw follows a young historian's quest for the truth behind the mythical Code of Kalantiaw and its maker, the historian Jose E. Marco. As his search continues, he finds that the precious document (and with it, the country's nationalism) is as fragile as torn pages flying in the wind.

From its unique set littered with torn history books, its masterful use of lighting, and its multiple-roled cast, *Kalantiaw* juggles between reality and fictional in a whirlwind that leaves its audience rethinking what it means to be a Filipino.

Kalantiaw was directed by Charles Yee. The play's artistic team was comprised of Glenn Sevilla Mas (Artistic Director and Company Moderator), Joseph Dela Cruz (OIC Company Moderator), Ed Lacson Jr. (Set Designer), Carlo Pagunaling (Costumes Designer), Meliton Roxas Jr. (Lights Designer), Jeff Hernandez (Sounds Designer), Gio Gahol (Choreographer), and Nic Perez (Graphics Designer). Its eight cast members were John Sanchez, Brian Ramos, Yvonne Ricaro, Chloe Fabul, Johnel Inojosa, Avie Alcantara, Jago Mallillin, and Jerome Flor. ☉

PUMA PHILIPPINES GETS ALJUR ABRENICA AS NEW AMBASSADOR

NICOLE C. BATAC



PUMA PHILIPPINES, THROUGH its exclusive Philippine distributor Cougar Athletic Trends, Inc., recently announced that they've signed on one of GMA's heartthrobs, Aljur Abrenica, as its new ambassador for Men's Training, which they hope would inspire others to stay fit and train hard.

The sports brand's Ignite Ultimate campaign is geared towards running and training and Aljur, who has been touted as the Ultimate Hunk of *Starstruck*'s Season 4, is a big part of that. He'll be part of different consumer and retail events happening around the country, training- and fitness-related social media content, as well as product programs. Expect to see a lot of the star promoting the PUMA brand.

"Aljur is the perfect embodiment of PUMA Training, and will be a wonderful complement to our sports-marketing training campaign of 'What are you training for? Get there #nomatterwhat,'" says Ma. Theresa Santos, Sales and Marketing AVP for PUMA Philippines, in a statement. "He may be very busy with the rigorous demands of his career as a local TV/movie celebrity, singer, and host; yet he still makes it a point to stay fit and train to keep that much toned body. He brings a lot of joy to the local audience because of his charisma and dedication to his craft. We are happy to have Aljur as one of our PUMA Philippines's Brand Ambassador, and we are looking towards a long term partnership with the Ultimate Hunk." ☉

OGGLING THE GOOGLEPLEX

THIS YEAR, GOOGLE yet again tops the *Fortune* “100 Best Companies to Work For”—a distinction it has achieved seven times in the last decade. That’s no small feat, yet is hardly news anymore. People have long known that Google is *the* place to work, particularly after the release of *The Internship*, a Hollywood flick depicting two middle-aged guys (played by Vince Vaughn and Owen Wilson) trying their luck to get into the company’s hallowed fold. We saw the sprawling campus on Mountain View, along with the delightful college atmosphere, and the out-of-the-box ethos that most of us can only dream of in our shoe-box cubicles while wedged tight in our niche on the immovable organizational chart.

Fortune cited Google’s ability to spark “the imagination of its talented and highly compensated workers, and by adding perks to an already dizzying array of freebies.” It quoted a Googler who said: “The company culture truly makes workers feel they’re valued and respected as a human being, not as a cog in a machine. The perks are phenomenal.”



DID YOU KNOW?

The name “Google” was coined as a misspelled version of googol—which means 10 to the 100th power, or the number one succeeded by 100 zeros. Obviously, it’s a pretty big number. But when you think about it, it’s quite apropos for the search engine that processes more than three billion queries a day.





2.

Bright sunshine greets us as we alight the chartered bus. The Google headquarters, known as the Googleplex, is nestled in Mountain View at the heart of so-called Silicon Valley. It's a little more than half an hour's drive from San Francisco. With more than 11,000 people, Google is by far the city's biggest employer.

It's quite a chilly day so our gaggle of writers (with four from the Philippines) welcomes intervening minutes to bask in the sun by the driveway as our minders and handlers get the media delegation together. There's also a few minutes to snap a few shots with the multi-colored "Google" sign on the building facade just across us.

A short walk later, we find ourselves inside the cafeteria. Gail Tan, Google Philippines country communications manager, leads us to tables reserved for the media, and we go on our merry way to secure grub at the vaunted Google café where appetites of Googlers and their guests are sated for free.

"I've never seen a line for salads before," remarks one employee to his coworker. He obviously didn't get the memo that a whole delegation of guests would be coming to savor a taste of the Goog 'ol living.

Pizza, pasta, salads, Asian food, Western food, cupcakes, vegetarian... most anything you can think of is served up in the premises. Still a bit hopped up and full of strong coffee from our earlier press session at another

Google location on Spear Street, I choose the path of least resistance and get some salad, soup, and a cupcake. The soda machine isn't working today, so I settle for what the Google Food Team calls "spa water." There's orange, basil, and carrot. It's basically the new-fangled fruit- or vegetable-infused drinking water.

After lunch, we make our way back outside to

1. Not quite Ghostbusters: The Android Marshmallow man.
2. Colorful bicycles are available for pollution-free, heart-friendly mobility at Googleplex.
3. Google puts a premium on innovation, and seeks to inspire its people with out-of-the-box workplaces and spaces.
4. Palatal adventure: With about 700 microkitchens, one is never too far away from a free meal or snack.



4.

the courtyard peppered with colourful umbrellas, waiting for our formal tour to commence. Unfortunately, our tour guide says we can only take photos outside buildings. Still, we relish our chance to catch a rare glimpse at corporate America's favorite workplace.

Immediately apparent, aside from the pristinely manicured gardens and lawns, is the proliferation of lawn furniture. Google overtly encourages its people to seek inspiration outside the traditional office setup. Indeed, we spy Googlers hard at work under shade or sun. One of Google's avowed strengths is a "workplace culture that encourages innovation

And, oh, the food. "We have around 700 micro-kitchens. See, we never want to be too far from food," shares our guide with a grin. At any time of the day, and wherever they are, employees can get raid the fridge or use the coffeemaker. It's not all palatal indulgences, either. Fancy a game of ping pong? How about an old-school round of *Frogger*? Know of any other employer that invests on these and actually lets its people use them anytime? In another nook



Electric vehicles (a Nissan Leaf and a BMW i3) charge blissfully at their own hallowed parking place

and a healthy disregard for the impossible." On its website, the company says: "When you want people to think creatively and push the boundaries of what's possible, their workspace shouldn't be a drab maze of beige cubicles."

Beside a large tree is "Stan," the life-size replica of a Tyrannosaurus Rex skeleton. Nothing too spectacular there, except that this T-Rex is attended to by pink flamingos, and other objects that don't hew to a central theme. Apparently, this to remind Googlers about constantly striving for innovation, lest they go the way of the dinosaurs. Yup, some obviously Darwinian stuff going on around. So, while Google lavishes some pretty incredible benefits and perks on its people, the company doesn't keep them on a tight leash and gives them all the latitude for creativity and inspiration.

of the building are some huge washing machines—ready for use by any Googler who brought dirty clothes along. Wash and fold services are subsidized.

From fitness classes, health clinics, beauty salons, oil changes, to a spa truck, bike-repair truck, nap pods, and even an adobo food truck, Google has most everything covered. Should we even be surprised that the firm receives a staggering two million job applications yearly? A *Forbes* article quipped that it's almost 10 times harder to get into Google than Harvard. ☉

BACK INTO THE BLUE

ORIS ADDS A SECOND MODEL TO ITS RETRO DIVERS SIXTY-FIVE

SWISS WATCH MANUFACTURER ORIS LAUNCHES ITS NEW DIVERS SIXTY-FIVE WITH A TWO-TONE GREY AND LIGHT "DEAUVILLE" BLUE DIAL OPTION. ITS DIAL DESIGN IS INSPIRED BY 1960S COLOR PALETTE, PARTICULARLY THE STYLES OF UPMARKET FRENCH SEASIDE RESORT OF DEAUVILLE.

PRODUCT FEATURES:

ORIS DIVERS SIXTY-FIVE
REF. NO. 733 7707 4065, Ø 40.00MM

- AUTOMATIC MOVEMENT ORIS CAL. 733, BASED ON SELLITA SW200, WITH DATE AT 6 O'CLOCK
- MULTI-PIECE STAINLESS STEEL CASE AND SCREW-IN STAINLESS STEEL CROWN. WATER RESISTANT TO 10 BAR/100M
- DIVER'S UNIDIRECTIONAL ROTATING BEZEL WITH BLACK ALUMINIUM INLAY WITH 60-MINUTE TIMER AND ZERO MARKER FILLED WITH SUPER-LUMINOVA®
- BUBBLE-CURVED SAPPHIRE CRYSTAL DOMED ON BOTH SIDES AND WITH ANTI-REFLECTIVE COATING INSIDE
- TWO-TONE GREY/LIGHT "DEAUVILLE" BLUE CURVED DIAL WITH PRINTED SUPER-LUMINOVA® NUMERALS AND INDICES. HOUR, MINUTE AND SECOND NICKEL HANDS FILLED WITH SUPER-LUMINOVA®



ASUS CHROMEBOOK MIXES MOBILITY WITH STYLE AND COMFORT



IF YOU'RE IN the market for a laptop that delivers great performance under pressure, you will surely fall in love with ASUS Chromebook C300.

Designed with sleekness and sophistication matched with brilliant features, the C300 is equipped with dual-core Intel Bay-Trail processor, allowing you to multitask while staying energy efficient.

It sports a hidden hinge for an added sleek look and a durable black matte finish for a premium feel. This 13.3-inch Chromebook, with almost just about 20mm thickness and weighs 1.41kg (with 3-cell battery) stays portable for a bag of virtually any size. It has refined chiclet keyboard engineered with a high-quality mechanism that provides a solid feel of responsiveness and gives accurate action. Its extra-spacious touchpad has multi-finger gesture support for easy and intuitive use.

The C300 promises connection of 802.11ac+Bluetooth 4.0 (Dual band) -Intel WIDI providing up to 3x faster signal strength from previous gen wireless. It also comes with a host of connectivity options. If you're also itching to watch movies on larger displays, connect through the

HDMI port to easily stream high quality content. And with SuperSpeed USB 3.0 port, you can easily transfer files or even charge your mobile phone while on the go.

And if you're out somewhere without a power source, you don't have much to worry about because of its promised 10-hour battery life. You can enjoy all-day entertainment with its flawless display of 16:9 HD (1,366 x 768 resolution) paired with high-quality stereo speakers with extra-large audio chambers. The HD web camera feature will assure you of a perfectly clear face-to-face video conference or capture photos or videos in superb detail.

Every Chromebook C300 comes with 100GB of free Google Drive space (which lasts for two years starting on the date you redeem the offer). Access your files and favorite Google services anytime and anywhere. With Google OS, you can count yourself out of the hassle of updates and anti-virus software. Its built-in anti-virus software will keep you protected so you can always surf and save securely.

Retailing for P17,995, the ASUS Chromebook C300 is locally available through MSI-ECS retail partners. For more product details, email marketing@msi-ecs.com.ph or call (02) 688-3510. ●

DIWATA-1 AND HOW IT AFFECTS US

WITH ALL THE socio-economic issues our country is currently facing as well as the uncertainty of the impending national elections, it would initially seem a bit unusual that this year would be the year our country would launch its first self-designed and assembled satellite.

Dubbed DIWATA-1 or PHL-Microsat-1, the new microsatellite is part of a project initiated by Hokkaido University and Tohoku University of Japan in partnership with several governments, universities, and organizations in the Philippines, Bangladesh, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Mongolia, Thailand, and Vietnam to send 50 microsatellites into space by 2050.

DIWATA-1 is the first of two satellites our country will be assembling and launching under the Department of Science and Technology's Philippine Scientific Earth Observation Micro-Satellite (PHL-Microsat) Program. It finished assembly last December 2015 and was launched last March 2016. The second satellite, DIWATA-2, will be launched sometime in 2017.

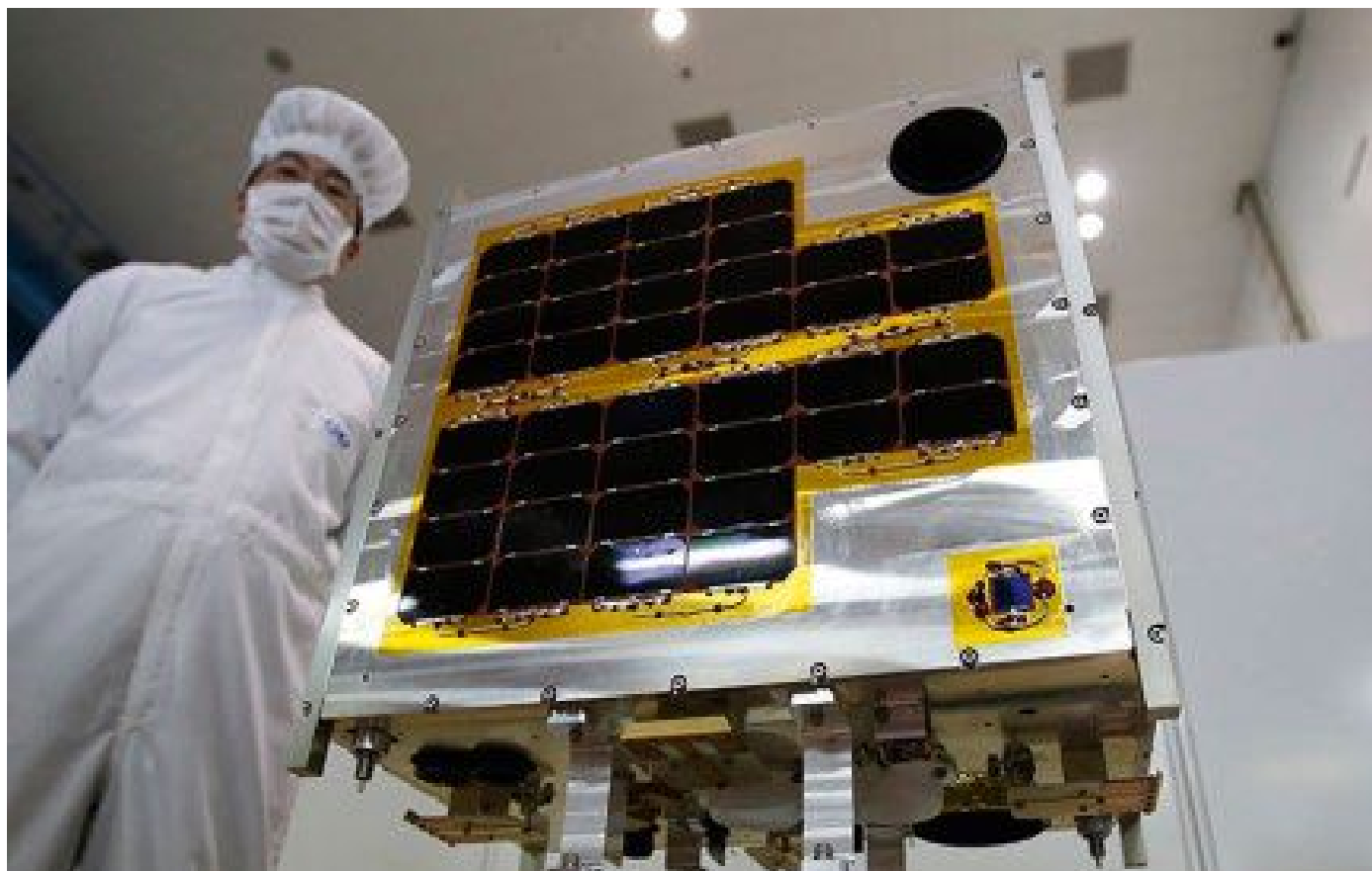
So, is having our own satellite a big deal and if it is, why? What does it mean for the Philippines and its people, now and in the future? Is it a worthwhile investment of

our country's precious and very limited resources or is our government out of their minds?

First off, the PHL-Microsat Program isn't cheap. Our government will be shouldering P324.8 million of the project's total cost of P840.82 million. A pretty hefty sum considering the state of our economy but a very small investment when the benefits and financial savings of having our own satellite are taken into account.

According to the Undersecretary of the Department of Science and Technology Rowena Cristina Guevara, the government spends up to and around P2 billion a year to acquire satellite imagery from foreign countries. In 2013, our government spent about P56 million to acquire satellite imagery of areas affected by Typhoon Yolanda. With DIWATA-1, our country will now be able to obtain its own satellite imagery (up to 3,600 images per day) any day of the year.

One of the main reasons the Hokkaido University and Tohoku University of Japan initiated this project is to establish the Asian Microsatellite Consortium (AMC), which will work together to photograph the aftermaths of natural disasters in the region. In our case, DIWATA-1 will give our government more capability to assess and manage the damage caused by the typhoons that hit our country on a yearly basis. DIWATA-1 will allow us to quickly obtain images of remote areas as well as areas that have become inaccessible due to the effects of typhoons giving us the information we would need to provide the proper aid and response to these areas, especially those that have been heavily struck.





DIWATA-1 will even allow us to better prepare for incoming typhoons as the micro-satellite will greatly improve the capabilities of PAGASA's weather forecasting as well as of DOST's Project NOAH disaster risk reduction and management program, enabling us to better prepare for natural disasters.

DIWATA-1's purposes aren't just limited to weather forecasting and disaster management though. The government also hopes to improve our agricultural industry by using DIWATA-1's data to monitor the El Niño phenomenon and its effects on our country giving farmers and local governments the opportunity to prepare and initiate contingencies to overcome the ill effects of the phenomenon. DIWATA-1 will also give our farmers the information they need to decide which crops to plant and when to plant them leading to better harvests, less waste, and the significant long-term growth of our agricultural industry.

DIWATA-1 will also allow us to monitor our country's geography, natural resources, forest cover, and mining activities, which will help the government implement or enhance resource management systems. It could also help in the protection and preservation of cultural and historical sites as well as defend and monitor our country's territorial borders.

Aside from the benefits we gain from the functions of the satellite itself, one of the hopes of our government has with the assembly of the PHL-Microsat Program and the launch of

DIWATA-1 is that these may pave the way for the formation of a Philippine Space Agency which could then lead to the growth and development of our country's electronics and aerospace industries that could support a local satellite manufacturing industry which, in turn, will create hundreds of jobs for our engineers and scientists right here at home.

Our country may also, consequentially, become a center for microsatellite research and development. To start, the University of the Philippines Diliman has already allocated an area within its campus for the establishment of a local microsatellite technology research and instructional facility wherein Filipino or foreign students and researchers can conduct research and development on microsatellite technology. It will also provide a location to teach and train other students, researchers, and industry engineers.

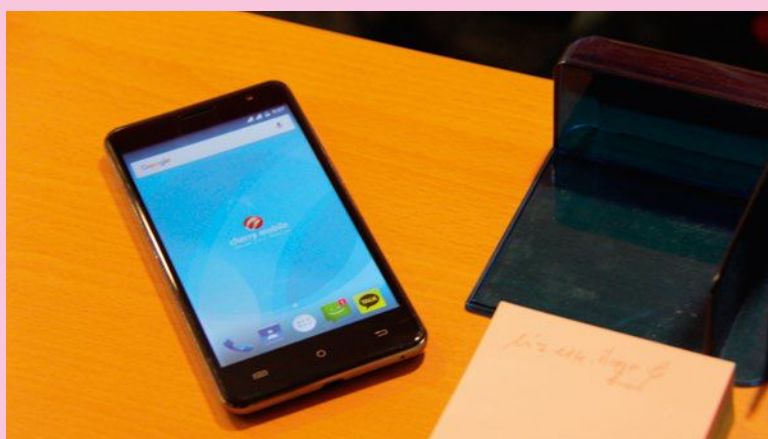
So while our new satellites may be costing our country a pretty penny, it's probably one of the most worthwhile investments our government has ever made. It brings us in line with most of the other ASEAN countries that have assembled and launched their own satellites.

The benefits and positive effects DIWATA-1 and DIWATA-2 encompass not only our scientific and technological capabilities but also affect several other industries leading to absolute and long-term growth for our nation. These effects will be felt now and far into the future. ☉

CHERRY MOBILE'S NEW DEVICES FOR THE BUSY BEES



Flare S Play



Flare S4 Lite

FOR BUSY INDIVIDUALS who are always on the move, Cherry Mobile has two feature-packed smartphones under its Flare series that are sure to be able to keep up with the many demands of a fast-paced lifestyle.

Designed to cater to the more discerning needs of highly mobile individuals, Cherry Mobile's Flare S4 Lite and S Play are two sleek, stylish smartphones that truly deliver.

Both offering a 5-inch HD screen, the Flare S4 Lite and Flare S Play are big enough for users to comfortably read and type on and go through their emails or simply browse the Internet.

Whether for business or pleasure, the Flare S4 Lite and Flare S Play are the perfect companions for individuals who need a reliable gadget to keep their schedules organized, work more efficiently no matter where in the world they may be, and be able to stay connected. Making use of two microSIMs, the Flare S4 Lite and Flare S Play also allow you to store your work and personal contacts separately.

Running on Android 5.1 Lollipop with 2GB RAM and 16GB of internal storage, the Flare S Play is perfect for performance seekers who want a smartphone that is fast and feature-packed. Meanwhile, the Flare S4 Lite isn't bad either with its 1GB RAM and 8GB internal storage (expandable up to 32GB via microSD).

Also LTE-ready (Flare S Play) and 3G-capable (Flare S4 Lite), users will be able to take these two smartphones anywhere and be assured of easy Internet connectivity.

The Flare S Play doesn't just allow you to easily stay connected with work contacts and loved ones or post on your favorite social media accounts like Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram, it's also a handy media device. It comes with an 8-megapixel camera with flash and 2-megapixel front camera that enables you to take crisp, high-quality pictures anytime. Meanwhile, the Flare S4 Lite has a quality 8-megapixel rear camera with LED flash and 5-megapixel front camera for quick snaps.

There's also no need for you to carry around several gadgets, make packing easier and save yourself from the stress of having to worry about several devices with the Flare S Play. With an internal storage of 16GB—expandable up to 32GB via microSD—you can easily download and save your favorite apps, store your favorite music files or even movies. But if you want to be able to easily browse other files, the Flare S Play is also compatible with today's OTG USBs. It also offers a digital television, making it the perfect smartphone for entertainment on the go.

The Flare S4 Lite also offers great battery life with its power efficient 1.5GHz hexa-core processor, enabling you to enjoy your device for much longer.

Cherry Mobile's Flare S4 Lite and S Play are the ideal smartphones to have at price points that won't hurt the pocket. You can get the S4 Lite for only P3,999 and the S Play for only P4,999. ☉

MICROSOFT EDGE: HOW GOOD IS IT?

LAST YEAR, MICROSOFT introduced a new version of its operating system and called it Windows 10. This new OS became available for free to anyone with a genuine copy of any of their previous platforms from Windows 7 and up. It has a lot of features that got people talking, including the shocking news that Microsoft was going to do away with Internet Explorer and replacing it with something called Microsoft Edge.

Love it or hate it, IE was a big part of our lives when it was the only option other than Netscape (don't lie, you still remember using that). For many a Windows user, the knowledge that the familiar gold-ringed blue "e" will be replaced with a slightly-retooled, flat "e" on their taskbars may take some adjustment time, but all in all, having the new Edge browser might not be so bad. But a few months after the release of Windows 10—and consequently, Microsoft Edge—we wonder if it's as good as it was promised to be.

IE has been around for majority of our web-surfing lives and during this time, it has become clogged with features people don't really use. It also became notorious for being the slowest of the "big three" browsers. This prompted users to run into the arms of Chrome and Firefox, and that little blue and gold "e" at the corner of your Windows-run screen was left unused. With Edge, the company delivered a lightweight browser that could race with its competitors in terms of loading speed.

Edge is built mostly on new tech and platforms, which makes it a totally different animal from IE. Because of this, Microsoft is able to bundle the browser seamlessly into desktop and mobile versions of Windows 10,

allowing users a smooth transition between devices. Rendering issues come here and there, but the overall experience is still slick and quick. Beware websites optimized for Safari or other browsers though as there will be times when Edge will stutter on the output.

It's important to also mention that Windows 10 comes with IE for those legacy sites and pages used by companies still doing their transition. When users come across a site like this, Edge helpfully prompts them to load the site or page on IE instead, which is helpful but would need to be phased out soon.

One cool feature of Edge allows you to add annotations to pages and save them for later. However, this won't really work offline. The note-taking feature allows one to write on the page itself, encircle important text, and even strips the page of nonessential elements so you're presented with just the page

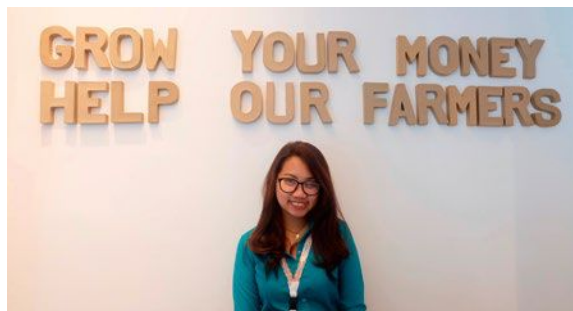
you're browsing. The Settings button pops out a dropdown of what you can tweak and adjust, unlike Chrome's need to open its settings on an actual tab.

Edge is quick, lightweight, and inviting to the user thanks to Cortana accompanying your browsing. Microsoft's version of a virtual assistant is ever-present on Edge, giving you additional information about a word you highlighted, or can even scan a page to pick out important information like restaurant addresses or hotel phone numbers.

Of course, there are some improvements to be made. Compatibility and the ability to load any site still needs work, as is the ability to allow users to browse pages offline (a lot of apps do this for you already). There's also the issue of extensions. While Edge can do the ad and pop-up blocking for you, there are a plethora of extensions that can make Internet browsing many times better and more convenient, but Edge users will have to wait a while more for that one.

Thanks to what Chrome and Firefox can do for users, IE lost Microsoft a lot of ground that Edge has to take back if it wants to be king of the hill once again. But it shows a lot of promise, and maybe this time around, users will actually want to use Microsoft's bundled browser beyond just using it to download other browsers. ☉





Cropital

STRIVING FOR GROWTH

WE FIND GROUNDBREAKING ideas in the most unusual situations or ordinary circumstances a lot of times. Cropital seems to represent that idea as it started out as a project, an idea to pitch for two competitions, and turned into a platform that could change our local agricultural landscape. • Rachel de Villa, whom we got to talk to last month for our **Entechpreneur** feature on Voyager Innovations, shares with us her startup's history and what they hope to do for our local farmers.

A quick look back

Cropital began when de Villa (CTO) and her two old friends Ruel Amparo (CEO) and Everett Ubiadas (COO) were thinking up ideas for two different competitions. One is an accelerator program in Malaysia and the other is the Talk 'N Text Mobile Developers Challenge. It came up during a brainstorming session, which had them thinking they could do something like real-life *Farmville*. But the practicalities of that approach—of having empty lands and filling it with crops you like—isn't optimal. What later became Cropital was a good enough idea for them to win both prizes.

But what do they really do? Cropital is similar to familiar crowdfunding sites like Kickstarter but instead of you funding your next phone or board game purchase, for example, you're investing in local farms.

Teach them how to farm

It isn't a secret that our local farmers get the shorter end of the stick, even

if they're the ones who are actually putting in the work to make sure we're fed. But let's put that into perspective. De Villa gives us the example of one farmer who earns around \$50 USD a month, which is roughly P2,000. How can that be a sustainable way to live? Unfortunately, a lot of our farmers share that experience.

According to de Villa, we currently have around 11 million farmers and two out of three of them live below the poverty line.

"When we analyzed why the situation was this way, why we import produce and why they're so expensive, it was because of lack of funding of the farmers," she says. "They borrow from the banks with such high interest rates, most of them will just sell their lands to convert these into buildings. *Wala na mauubos na yung food.*"

But for those who stick it out, another problem is productivity. A lot of the farmers still use traditional methods to farm, which won't be effective in the long run.

"There are so many studies but it doesn't reach the end of the line," de Villa says. "*Hindi nakakarating sa kanila yung bagong technology* on how to improve their productivity. *Kahit yung mga simpleng tanong* like what's the best fertilizer to use isn't available to them."

But it isn't just about providing funds for the farmers, de Villa sees their venture as an end-to-end process. They want to help out the farmers by connecting them to experts who can



Cropital team
with advisor Dr. Ed
Canela



help them out and give them access to different resources. Teaching them to farm, so to speak.

"This is the core of the business: to improve productivity. If you just keep giving them funds, then at the end of the day that won't empower them. You're not really helping them."

How it works

As of this writing, Cropital's current farms have been fully funded. But for those interested in investing in the future, you'll need to make a minimum investment of P5,000. You get to choose which produce you want to support or if you want to invest in a farm that will be ready for harvest in three to six months or a more long-term investment.

One good thing about it for backers is they aren't just donating money to help the farmers. They are also sharing the profit from the harvest. "The success of the farmer is your success also," de Villa says. But she emphasizes they're not after backers who are just in it for the money. They want people who just genuinely want to help.

Support has been good so far. When they started in May 2013 and went public four months after, they were able to complete funding for five farms in



and the farmer himself/herself and his/her motivations.

Of course, they also look into skills. She understands that the farmers are experts but they do background checks just as well to make sure they can be trusted. A lot of the farms that are up for funding with them approached the team themselves. So, yes, they are open to applications, too.

"We don't want farmers *na may ere na 'Ako yung beneficiary, kawawa ako.*" We want those with motivations like wanting to get their children through school," she says.

They need to trust the farmers, especially with all the people and resources being placed into the venture. It pays off for the farmers, too, as they get majority of the profit. She admits the farmers can't believe when they hear they're getting most of the profit instead of the bare minimum.

Growing all around

The farms they support aren't concentrated in one area. They have one in Laguna, Quezon, and ongoing reviews for Visayas and Mindanao. Some of the crops they back include high-valued ones like tomatoes and Napier grass, which is a source of renewable energy. They hope to bring the platform to countries around the world, too, in hopes of solving agricultural issues there.

The team hopes to scale up and support a thousand farms by next year. They also aim to incorporate all components of the agricultural life into their ecosystem—from the farmer, the investor, the supplier, and to the buyer. It's a promising concept but we have to wait and see how this works.

When asked about dealing with the middle men, de Villa says, "It's more of including them into the system. *Parang si Uber*, they took away the taxi component so a lot of people got angry at them. For us, we have to include people who might lose their job or give them other sources of income to benefit everyone."

It's an ambitious project to say the least but one that seems to be bearing fruit (pun intended) and could possibly do a lot of good for our farmers and our food supply. ☺

ALL FARMS ARE NOW FULLY-FUNDED. We'll be posting new farms soon! [Register](#) today to receive updates.

CROPITAL [About Us](#) [How It Works](#) [Help & Support](#) [Log In](#) [Sign-up](#)

We are the only crowdfunding platform connecting you to help finance our farmers

SHORT TERM
INVEST ON FARMS THAT WILL BE READY FOR HARVEST IN 3-6 MONTHS.
[BROWSE FARMS](#)

LONG TERM
INTRODUCING FARMS THAT HAS LONG TERM INVESTMENT OPTIONS.
[LEARN MORE](#)

just three days. They weren't even fully advertising the site. They just posted on Facebook and let the power of connections and social media do the work. But de Villa knew at this point they had something that could change people's lives.

"Cropital's focus is not for profit really. We aim for social impact. We want to empower our farmers for them to sustainably increase their productivity," she says.

They offer trainings post-harvest to teach the farmer about financial responsibility because she says a lot

of farmers just end up spending their earnings on drinking or on cockfights. She hopes they could help these farmers increase their incomes, too.

Through the ringer

But how do these farmers get chosen? De Villa says they start looking at what's in demand. They want to make sure the harvest is bought to bring profit to everyone involved. After that they take different criteria into consideration to select which farmers to support. These include their area, the weather in their area,



MWC'S MARVELS

MOBILE WORLD CONGRESS has come and gone and leaving in its wake some pretty exciting devices.

LG G5

THE TRANSFORMER

In keeping with the premium, flagship quality of smartphones, LG has replaced the plastic exterior from the G4, its previous flagship, with a full-metal unibody. However, unlike most phones using full-metal design, the G5 still has a removable battery as well as an expandable microSD slot that can take up to 2TB.

Speaking of expandable, the G5 is also designed to be modular; the bottom slides out to reveal the removable battery. This bottom can be replaced with other modules such as the LG CAM Plus, which adds camera controls to the phone as well as an additional battery to take more photos. LG also announced the LG Hi-Fi Plus with B&O Play module, which is a DAC and AMP module that boasts high quality audio.

It also has an 8-megapixel front camera for high quality selfies. The rear has two cameras that include a 16-megapixel sensor as well as an 8-megapixel sensor, which assists the main camera to give 135-degree wide-angle photos. It even has a fingerprint scanner located at the rear.

Charging the LG G5 uses the new USB type-C connector and Qualcomm's Quick Charge 3.0 technology.

The G5 has a 5.3-inch IPS LCD display with a resolution of 2,560 × 1,440. It's an always-on that shows the time as well as notifications. LG promises that the feature only consumes 0.8 percent per hour of battery and that only 1/3 of the screen is always on.

Under the metal skin, the LG G5 sports Qualcomm's latest Snapdragon 820 SoC, which has the X12 LTE modem that supports even higher throughput and promises faster data speeds. It also boasts a whopping 4GB of RAM and 32GB of storage as standard. It comes in four colors—silver, gold, pink, titan (gray)—and will come with Android 6.0.1 Marshmallow with LG UX.

Xiaomi Mi 5

MUCH-AWAITED COMEBACK

What's notable about the Xiaomi Mi 5's exterior is the ceramic back plate. Xiaomi chief Hugo Barra mentioned that while the unique back panel added to the phone's production cost, it also added durability when the phone gets dropped. The Mi 5 comes in with a 5.1-inch Full HD display, which goes against existing flagship models that push the boundary in terms of screen size.

It runs on a Qualcomm Snapdragon 820 chip paired with an Adreno 530 graphics card to handle the load. The company's homebrew UI, MIUI 7, is overlaid on an Android Marshmallow OS. The Mi 5 comes in 3GB and 4GB RAM variants, the latter dubbed as the Mi 5 Pro, which comes with 128GB of storage space, while the former has 32GB and 64GB sub-flavors.

For imaging, the Mi 5 has a 16-megapixel Sony IMX298 sensor, f/2.0 aperture, phase-detection AF, 4-axis optical image stabilization (which works for low-light situations and moving subjects), and pixel-to-pixel isolation. The front camera is a 4-megapixel shooter with a Qualcomm Spectra Image processor.

The Mi 5 also features quick charging capabilities, beautify functions for the camera software, and can support HD voice calls over LTE, with options to put in image overlays in real time. The phone comes in black, white, and gold variants.



Sony Xperia X

THE OVERACHIEVERS

The latest additions to the gorgeous Sony Xperia line—the Xperia X, X Performance, and XA—makes me think the folks who named it are part of the Vin Diesel movie franchise or something. Anyway.

Most of the love during the event went to the Xperia X and the X Performance (which Sony Mobile President and CEO Hiroki Totoki described as having the “ultimate speed and connectivity”), but we’re already assuming the XA (the “super mid-range” model) would do good here as well. Both the X and X Performance are equipped with Predictive Hybrid Autofocus—this combines object tracking and Sony’s Motion Prediction Engine for clearer and more defined photos, even if the subjects are in motion. And both were given the brains to handle this workload and others: the X has a Qualcomm Snapdragon 650 processor and 3GB RAM with 32GB or 64GB internal storage and the X Performance, a Snapdragon 820 with 32GB internal storage and 3GB of RAM.

As for the lackluster smartphone battery life, Sony’s Xperia X series has two tricks up its sleeve: a projected two-day battery life through Sony’s smart battery management system; and support for adaptive charging technology from Qnovo, which cuts down on the total charging time.

All three phones come with Android Marshmallow, the X Performance is waterproof, and the X and X Performance have 1080p displays and fingerprint sensors (the XA, 720p and sans sensor). The XA runs on Mediatek MT6755 Helio P10, 2GB of RAM, and 16GB internal storage.

HP Elite X3

A SURPRISE APPEARANCE

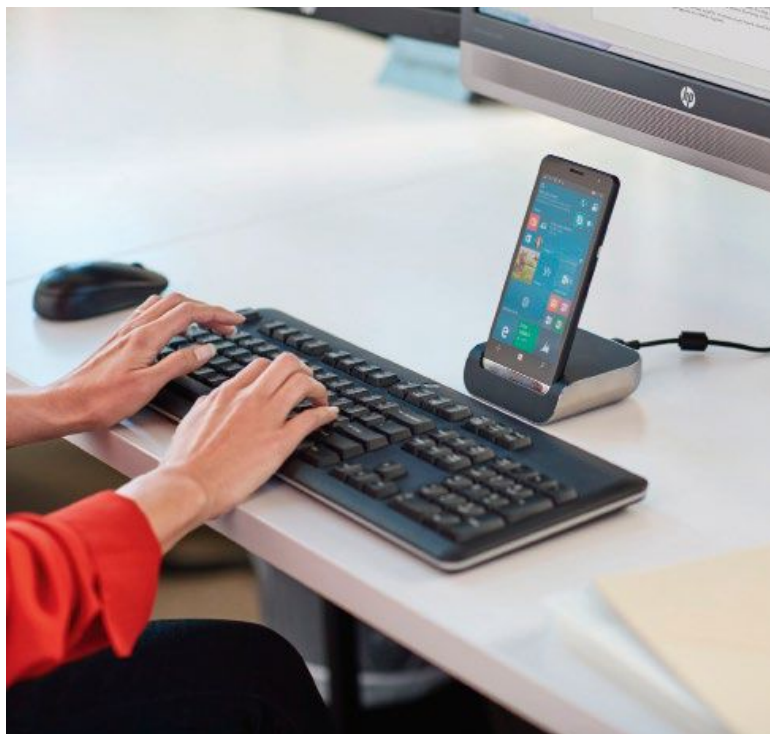
Windows phones have never really gotten anywhere in the consumer market. But that doesn't seem to matter to HP as the company released a new high-end smartphone called the Elite X3 that runs on Windows 10.

HP designed the Elite X3 around Continuum, a feature of Windows 10 that lets Windows-based smartphones act like a full Windows computer by plugging it into a larger display or dock. So along with the Elite X3, HP is also selling a pair of accessories specifically to accommodate the use of Continuum.

The first is a small Desk Dock which features a slew of ports including two regular USB ports, one USB Type-C port, a DisplayPort, and an Ethernet port, which can turn the Elite X3 into a full desktop computer. The second is what HP is calling the Mobile Extender, a laptop-looking accessory that is pretty much a display, a keyboard, and a battery, which turns into a full Windows laptop when wirelessly connected to the Elite X3.

One big hurdle that HP needs to cross with the Elite X3 is its inability to run full desktop software. HP is building its own suite of software that will allow the Elite X3 to run full desktop software from the cloud.

To accommodate HP's plan for the Elite X3, the company definitely had to equip its latest smartphone with some pretty hefty hardware. The Elite X3 features a 6-inch Quad HD display, a Qualcomm Snapdragon 820 processor, 4GB of RAM, 64GB of internal storage, support for up to a 2TB microSD card, an iris scanner on the front of the device as well as a fingerprint sensor on the back, and a larger 4,150mAh battery.



Lenovo Vibe K5 and K5 Plus

AFFORDABLE POWERHOUSE

Lenovo has once again expanded its presence in the international budget smartphone market with the announcement of two new devices, the Vibe K5 and the Vibe K5 Plus. Both devices feature similar specifications and differ only in their display resolutions, processors, and price tags.

The Vibe K5 features a 5-inch HD 720p LCD display and a Qualcomm Snapdragon 415 octa-core processor while the Vibe K5 Plus comes equipped with a higher resolution 5-inch Full HD 1080p screen and a more powerful Qualcomm Snapdragon 616 quad-core processor.

The rest of the Vibe K5 and K5 Plus's specifications are exactly the same which include their metal bodies, an Adreno 405 graphics chip, 2GB of RAM, 16GB of internal storage, expandable storage support via microSD card up to 32GB, dual SIM dual standby support, and Android 5.1 Lollipop pre-installed.

Both new devices are also equipped with a 13-megapixel rear camera, a 5-megapixel front-facing camera, and a 2,750mAh battery. Connectivity-wise, both smartphones support 4G LTE, Wi-Fi 802.11 b/g/n, and Bluetooth 4.1.

Both come in three color options—Silver, Gray, and Gold—and are targeted at emerging smartphone markets such as India and Southeast Asia where the demand for affordable smartphones is high. ☉



IN MY -----
OPINION



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on this often talked about
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gives us a glimpse of what
went down at the Mobile World
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Have we been oversaturated
with superhero films?
MICAHA PEREZ shares his
thoughts on the matter.

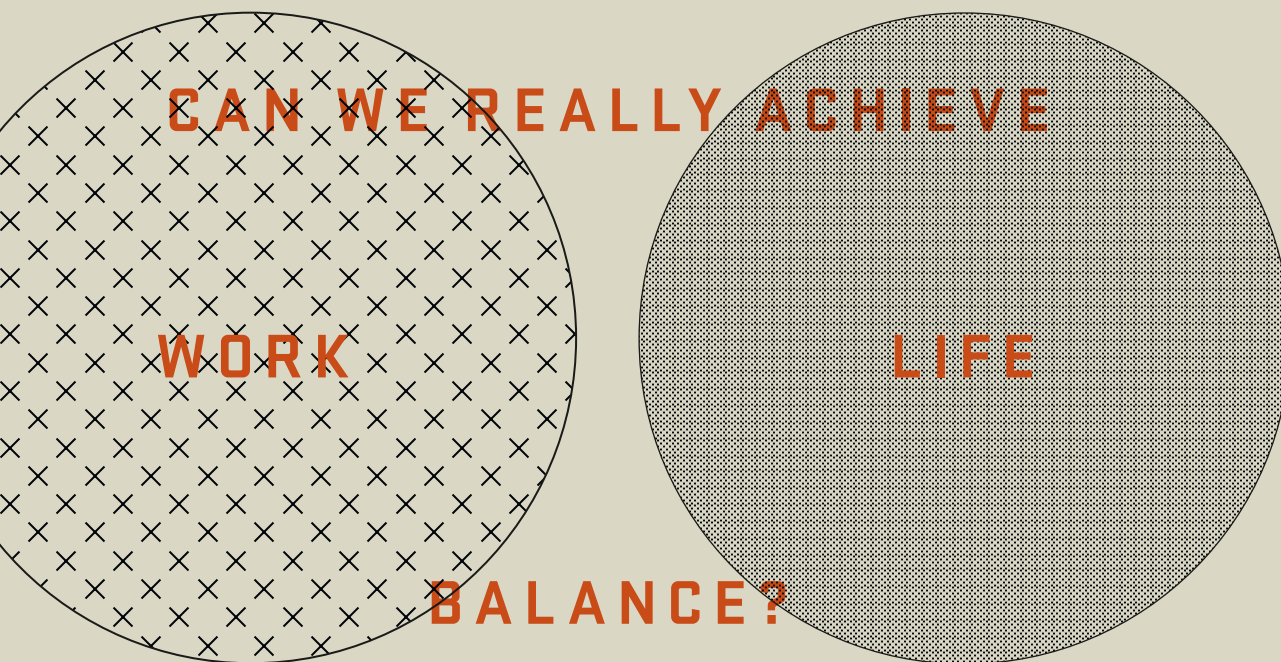
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ARDIE LOPEZ pays tribute to
this dying breed of cameras.

ON **WORK**

Is it a myth or something we really can attain?


IN **ALEX SANTIAGO'S** OPINION

WHEN I LANDED my first job as a copywriter, one of the first people I told was a very accomplished friend who had been a mentor of sorts back in college. “Hmm,” he said. “Remember to make time for your personal interests.”

“What do you mean exactly?”

“Don’t forget that you have a life outside of work. Don’t let the excitement of it all, the money coming in twice a month, the chance to work with big brands, consume you and burn you out.”

Yeah, I remember thinking. That’s not going to happen.

But the thing about being young and fresh from a privileged college world is that you’re stupid. Really, really stupid. Stupid and idealistic enough to believe that the world is your oyster, that high-paying and fulfilling jobs would magically come your way and that you’d somehow have enough time in a day to work, go to the gym, eat, meet up with friends, and still have enough hours to come home and catch up on TV shows before falling into bed for a good night’s sleep. After all, you managed to pull all-nighters in college juggling academics and your extra-curricular activities. What’s the worst the so-called real world could throw at you?

Three years later, I now answer office emails at the dinner table on weekends, far beyond billable working hours. I recently went to a boxing gym and answered Viber messages for a client in between rounds, much to my trainer’s chagrin. The last time I met my friends—about a month ago for a very quick dinner so I could go back to churning out headlines—my mentor friend gave me a lecture on the three words no stressed, overworked, sleep-deprived person ever wants to hear: “Work-life balance.”

I resisted the urge to throw my bread at him.

Being able to compartmentalize work and life is now a

fantasy—a pipe dream that counts on the outdated notion that everyone shuts off work mode once the clock strikes five. The generalization being that we now live in a connected society, so the idea of being inaccessible without a way to become a mobile employee is both dream and disaster for a lot of us.

However, working away from the confines of sheltered university life has showed me that, for a great number of employees who don’t have a backup plan, who don’t have the privilege to just walk out once they burn out, who depend on their jobs for money to feed their families—the idea of work-life balance is a necessity. We’ve all read the articles on how the older generation has always valued the importance of dividing professional and personal spheres, a way of thinking ingrained in the minds of our parents and grandparents. Separation is important—a way to stay sane, perhaps.

This mindset hasn’t taken hold of the younger generation, who now come into the professional world equipped with their own ideas of connectivity and creativity that transcend the ol’ nine-to-five. Maybe I’m coming into this as a millennial with very limited experience of the “real world,” but the very idea of balancing work and life—of keeping both separate as entities that exist in different boxes—is obsolete.

No matter what your job is, you’re now expected to be accessible and connected 24/7; there’s no excuse to not be reachable because of advancements in connectivity that make it possible to have Skype conference calls or even jobs in social media. It’s now possible to be answering emails while on the treadmill at the gym, or to be checking your NBA fantasy league on your smartphone while simultaneously doing a report. The world has changed, and so has our perception of how we view “work” and “life.”



ALEX SANTIAGO
is a copywriter
who would
rather stay at
home with her
toys, Korean
pop music,
and depressing
Japanese novels
than go out this
weekend.

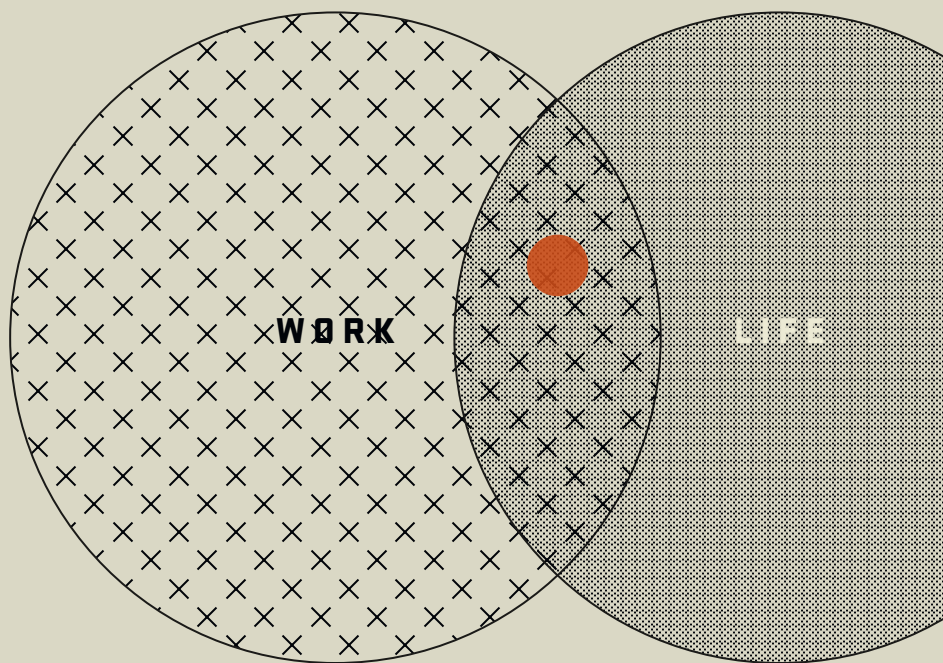
Finding a way to seamlessly integrate work and life sounds like a much better option. Instead of “balance,” work-life “integration” allows you to blend your professional and personal worlds harmoniously, by creating a routine that allows you a much-needed breather from the demands of your job, but gives you enough flexibility to be “at work” so you don’t have to miss anything.

Granted, this idea greatly depends on technology and connectivity to even be possible, and such, it’s taking a while for the boomer generation, those used to “unplugging” after a long day in the office, to embrace this shift. Younger professionals, who are more likely to depend on their gadgets to keep them sane in the chaos of day-to-day life, have already slowly mastered it.

Work-life integration greatly counts on your knowing your exact priorities to be able to work well. In an article published in the *Harvard Business Review*, Wharton Professor Stewart Friedman listed three principles—real, whole, and innovative—to help you figure out what to do to be able to successfully integrate work and your personal life: “To be real is to act with authenticity by clarifying what’s important to you. To be whole is to act with integrity by recognizing how the different parts of your life (work, home, community, self) affect one another. All this examination allows you to be innovative.”

For example, I work in advertising, a notoriously demanding industry where 9 p.m. overtime is considered “early” and weekend shoots are commonplace. I had to learn early to accept that in the 24 hours I have in a day, around 10-12 hours will be spent at work—two sitting in traffic to and from the office, around six asleep (if I’m lucky)—which leaves only 4-6 hours free. And yet, those remaining hours will be divided into errands, eating (our number one priority, to be honest), and other necessary duties that make it near-impossible to dedicate a few hours to the things I love—reading comic books, watching TV shows, and actually writing for fun and not for a client.

Finding a way to integrate my professional self and my personal life was an exercise in trial and error—obviously I won’t be able to become a jack of all trades with ample time to, as the Americans say, *have it all*—but treating my life as a Venn diagram of priorities has allowed me the freedom to



Finding a way to seamlessly integrate work and life sounds like a much better option. Instead of “balance,” work-life “integration” allows you to blend your professional and personal worlds harmoniously, by creating a routine that allows you a much-needed breather from the demands of your job, but gives you enough flexibility to be “at work” so you don’t have to miss anything.

find small pockets of time to decompress. I give myself ten minutes every hour to take a break from my to-do list—sort of a reverse Self-Control app that gives me a bit of breathing room to read articles, buy from Potato Corner (very, very important), or wander aimlessly around a bookstore. Some days I take out the breaks completely to be able to finish work early and spend the evening running or catching up with friends over dinner.

Everybody’s experiences are very different, meaning there’s no one-size-fits-all way to integrate your working life and your personal interests. An employee who works in an uptight corporate environment may not have the same freedom as one who works in a creative agency or startup, for example. It’s determining our priorities for work, home, community, and self, and studying how they can come together. ☉

ON MOBILE TECHNOLOGY

A quick look at where we are in the world of mobile tech.

MOBILE WORLD CONGRESS SETS THE PACE FOR INNOVATION IN 2016

IN
GADJO CARDENAS SEVILLA'S
OPINION



GADJO CARDENAS SEVILLA is a freelance journalist based in Toronto. He has covered technology, business, and lifestyle for a variety of publications. He is currently a technology columnist for international magazines, newspapers and websites.

MOBILE WORLD CONGRESS (MWC) held yearly in Barcelona, Spain is a great barometer of what's to come to market in terms of mobile products, technologies, and trends. In many ways, it has become a more important technology show than the International Consumer Electronics Show (CES) because it's razor focused on mobile technology, which is still the most innovative area in technology today and the one that makes the most money on a global scale.

Oddly enough, the big player like Apple and Google don't really figure in MWC since these companies have their own powwows and love fests early on in the year. Google is

represented by various OEMs but the focus is on hardware over software and Apple likes to dominate the news stream by holding its own exclusive events.

This year's MWC in Barcelona brought the focus back on smartphones with various new flagship models sporting the latest processors, the latest display technology, improved cameras and software, as well as better battery life, water resistance features, and premium materials.

Where are the wearables?

While MWC is mostly a mobile show, there was a lot of attention paid to accessories and ecosystems but nary a mention of smartwatches or wearables. It seems the interest for these devices has slowed after last year's frenzy and this may be because of a number of reasons.

The Apple Watch seems to be the dominant smartwatch even if Apple hasn't revealed sales numbers, analysts like IDC have estimated, 11.6 million Apple Watches sold in calendar 2015. Android Wear devices, which are based on Google's operating system, seem as fragmented as Android phones with various manufacturers offering one-off features and a lack of standardization in functionality across the line.

Still, it's surprising that we didn't see more wearable announcements at the show, especially given that smartwatches have outshipped traditional Swiss watches for the first time.

While technology-based wearables (i.e. smartwatches and devices made by smartphone or tech companies) were mostly absent at MWC, luxury timepiece makers have started announcing their first smartwatches a month later at the huge Baselworld conference in Switzerland (*check out our coverage from Baselworld on page 42*), which is timely since smartwatches have surpassed traditional Swiss watches in sales. Yet, it seems many technology companies have stalled their product releases and seem to be missing out on the momentum.

At the same we're seeing smartwatch pioneer Pebble lay off 25 percent of its staff and refocus on health tracking, while the Apple Watch has a new lower starting price to entice more users.

Accessories, ecosystems, and virtual reality

The takeaway from MWC was that phones are great as standalone devices and pocket computers; they can be awesome when you extend their functionality with great accessories and ecosystems.

LG demonstrated this with their LG G5 flagship which, is an impressive device on its own, really shines as a tool with the addition of various modules and accessories. LG has addressed the inherent limitation of smartphones, which are phenomenal multifunctional devices that are constrained by their thin size and enclosures. By enabling users to add camera and audio modules (along with replaceable batteries), LG can create more interest in specific functionalities within their devices.

Samsung also looked at accessories to play a major role in the success of its Galaxy S7 devices. The company no longer owns the market in large devices and the curved display



MWC 2016 has shown that the bar can still be raised in mobile and smartphones and while these devices continue to become more powerful, better connected, and multifunctional, companies can grow their markets by extending experiences through accessories and services that can help people consume as well as create the next generation of content.



gimmick has been played out (even if the new devices have better software to support it) so the next step is to leverage virtual reality (VR), create standalone cameras for shooting panoramic movies, as well as battery cases and wireless charging docks.

HTC, in a way, was ahead of its time. Its RE Camera launched two years ago. While not a 360° or VR camera, it did extend the functionality of their (and other) phones while freeing up the phone's resources. The company's HTC Vive VR headset is an expensive example of a first-mover product that has already generated a lot of buzz.

I've had time to spend with both a Samsung Galaxy S7 and a pre-production LG G5 and have these thoughts to share. The Galaxy S7 feels like a device that was developed a year ago and while it's an attractive phone and arguably the best device Samsung has shipped to date, it doesn't seem to bring anything dramatically new to the table.

The LG G5, on the other hand, is clearly the smartphone to beat in 2016. Not only does it match the performance and features of the Samsung Galaxy S7 (save for the water resistance), the LG G5 has an innovative dual-camera, a powerful expansion platform for accessories that LG calls "Friends," and possibly third-party accessories.

LG has adopted USB Type-C as well as the latest version of Qualcomm's Quick Charge 3.0 technology, making it a forward-thinking device built not just for the present, but for the future.

VR is buzzy

The idea of VR and its applications is really catching on. While the better examples of the technology are still expensive, limited, and far from complete, we can expect every major technology company to be working on something VR-related.

MWC 2016 has shown that the bar can still be raised in mobile and smartphones and while these devices continue to become more powerful, better connected, and multifunctional, companies can grow their markets by extending experiences through accessories and services that can help people consume as well as create the next generation of content.

The shoe is on the other foot

Mobile World Congress usually shows what everyone is doing in reaction to Apple's iPhone but this year, it seems, the shoe is on the other foot.

It looks like Apple needs to step up and come up with something dramatic with the iPhone 7. The iPhone SE, to put it honestly, is 2015 technology crammed into 2012 industrial design. It introduces nothing new but it does update the iPhone 5 form factor with many of the iPhone 6s's key features.

As outstanding as the iPhone 6s and iPhone 6s Plus are as devices and linchpins to a variety of ecosystems, they lack many features enthusiasts demand from a modern smartphone.

Adding features like water resistance, always on-display, fast charging, wireless charging, manual camera controls, and RAW output capability are just some of the standard features on many Android phones that would be welcome.

Many of the MWC devices are coming to market soon and from what I've seen, there seems to be a renaissance in smartphone hardware that goes beyond the usual technology upgrades and features; thus, making 2016 a great year for new smartphone and mobile technology. ●

ON POP CULTURE

With the abundance of superhero flicks, can we say there are too many of them?

HOW MANY

SUPERHEROES



IN MICAH PEREZ'S OPINION



BATMAN V SUPERMAN: DAWN OF JUSTICE[®] was out recently. Then we have *Captain America: Civil War* and *X-Men: Apocalypse*

out this month (and the covers of this issue no less). We just had *Deadpool*, too, and while the Avengers have already been established in the Marvel Cinematic Universe, DC is doing its best to complete the Justice League and put that team out there as fast as they can. We are surrounded by superhero movies today and given the cross-movie world-building trend set by Marvel that won't change anytime soon. In the current situation then, can you really blame someone for commenting on the huge number of superheroes currently in big screens across the world?

I think this phenomenon can be understood in a number of ways. First and foremost is the apparent lack of originality in the films Hollywood continues to make. There seems to be a trend of films based on material from other mediums. Other than comic books, best-selling novels have also been routinely converted into movies in the past years. Young adult novels have especially been prone to getting film adaptations—they even started the trend of splitting the last movie into two parts just to continue milking the franchise.

I like to see this supposed oversaturation of superheroes in movies under a different light. More than the lack of originality or the encroachment of two entertainment giants into another popular medium, I believe that this trend is a product of the ascendancy of what I like to call geek culture.

Personally, I believe that *Harry Potter* was justified in this while *Twilight* was not. Moviegoers today can also observe a good number of reboots. While old novels like *The Great Gatsby* have had their film adaptations using modern techniques, old movies like *Godzilla* and *Robocop* have also been given the 21st-century Hollywood facelift, even old TV series like *Star Trek* aren't immune. In this context, the ascendancy of superheroes in movies can be seen as part of an ongoing trend in films in general.

It can also be argued that studios are jumping on the bandwagon of superhero movies, especially given the huge success of the recent Marvel creation and prolongation of a cinematic universe for its characters. If you think about it, the age of standalone superhero movies (or trilogies in the case of the first *Spiderman* films) because what is happening now is the steady migration of the DC and Marvel universes to the big screen. Their age-old rivalry in the colored panels of pages is now made available to a new generation using new technology for an even more spectacular experience. Superhero movies, and the superhero universes being built around all these interrelated films, are a juxtaposition of the Marvel vs. DC corporate saga onto the big screen, if observed under this frame.

However, I like to see this supposed oversaturation of superheroes in movies under a different light. More than the



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These days
he continues
to read, run,
and write.
While pursuing
his Master's
Degree, he likes
to express his
competitiveness by pub
stomping noobs
in different
Multiplayer
Online Battle
Arena (MOBA)
games. If it's
a new piece of
tech, he has
most likely
heard of it. If it
has a resounding
impact on
our society, he
most definitely
has an opinion
about it.

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lack of originality or the encroachment of two entertainment giants into another popular medium, I believe that this trend is a product of the ascendancy of what I like to call geek culture.

Let's define some things first. A geek is different from a nerd or a dork. The latter two are often associated with either academic excellence/obsession or plain social awkwardness. Geek, on the other hand, refers more to that type of person who has devoted an extreme level of time and effort towards a certain passion or hobby that doesn't fall under the common understanding of what is popular. When you hear the term "comic book geek" that's simply a person who knows a lot about comic books—it isn't necessarily his job to know all that stuff, he learns them because he wants to.

When I talk about geek culture ascending, what I mean to say is that a revolution seems to have happened in the past two decades when it comes to social norms in pop culture. It used to be that what persons "geeked over" were things outside the mainstream, and so these people and their passions were sidelined. We all know the stereotype that *Spiderman* represents of course: that nerdy kid who got bullied by the popular jocks. I think that's a reflection of where geekiness used to be in our everyday lives.

Today, however, being a geek can be seen as cool. At the very least, a person's geekiness is much more accepted these days. And the things people used to geek over in the sidelines of society are now mainstream: video games, fantasy and science fiction novels, comic books, tabletop games, etc. Knowing lots of stuff about these things now makes you just a normal person, not a focus of ridicule. And if you think about it, what separates a comic book geek, who knows all the heroes and their powers and the dates and issues major events happened in, from a huge basketball fan, who knows all the statistics of his favorite players? Not much, in my opinion.

I like seeing the trend as a change in demographics as well. Those kids who were so crazy about video games and frequented the arcades are now the ones designing all these cool games and gaming platforms for today's generation. Fans of comic books, who grew up with the characters in the '70s, '80s, and '90s, are now the ones writing, drawing, and adapting them to the big screen. They're pretty good at it, too.

However, it's also important to note that simply being a superhero movie doesn't equate to success. Sure, they're popular today, but there have been some major failures in this regard as well. We can look at the *Wolverine* movies, and the *Green Lantern*, and let's not forget how hard it's been for Marvel to create a real vibrant franchise out of the *Incredible Hulk*. They're popular but they're not all successful.

For those who complain about there being so many of them, let's just remember that there continues to be other movies out there. Good ones, too. If the thought of another superhero movie makes you puke then watch *Creed*, *The Revenant*, *Star Wars: The Force Awakens*, *The Good Dinosaur*, *The Hobbit*, *The Martian*, *Inside Out*... there are so many other good movies that came out at the same time as the huge blockbuster superhero ones that, really, I don't see it as such a big deal.

In the end, I think it's really just about a movie being a good movie, whether it's set in a world of superheroes or not. The comic book trend will die out eventually I think, to be replaced by something new. Or it may just become a new constant genre that will fade into the background of normalcy. What matters is that the characters are interesting, the plot is engaging, and the movies enjoyable, superheroes or not. ☉

ON **CAMERAS**

It's time we said goodbye to these trusty shooters.

A FINAL HOOT FOR THE POINT-AND-SHOOT

 IN **ARDIE O. LOPEZ'S** OPINION

IF I MAY be so bold in barking out a declaration as an answer to the question “Do point-and-shoots have a place in the smartphone photography age?” it would be: “Yes, if point-and-shoot cameras can eventually make calls, do SMS, edit and process photos internally, and go online.”

I consider it an honor and a privilege to write this column for *2.0*, as I have a deep respect for the magazine and especially towards its Editor-in-Chief, and I would've started it in a more proper and traditional manner, but the question kind of grabbed me by the ankles. I mean, I can't believe I hadn't asked myself that before. How digital photography has literally exploded in terms of its technological advancements and vastly changed how everyone takes photos and how the mobile phone has evolved so much that its original purpose for being has literally become its least utilized feature. It has become too smart, you hardly use it to call anyone anymore! And how the correlation between the two indispensable gadgets have prompted me to answer the question in that very manner.

My very first digital point-and-shoot camera was a Kodak DC210 Plus, which I acquired for under P18,000 in the late '90s. It had a 1-megapixel CCD sensor, a 2x optical zoom or 29-58mm (equivalent) lens, and was capable of producing vibrant 1,152 x 864 pixel images that were ideal for up to 5 x 7" prints! It used CompactFlash memory cards for storage, and was powered by two AA Alkaline batteries.

Back then, I felt I was the bomb (and I'd have you know that I grinned and cringed immediately after I typed that) with that “state-of-the-art” Kodak camera that weaned me away from using 35mm film. I mean, using that roughly brick-sized digital point-and-shoot camera has eliminated a sizable part of the process of which I produced corporate videos and print ads for my advertising clients back then, for the images from it were immediately editable and usable as required. I just had to recount all that in detail, for looking back at the amount and quality of work output I was able to squeeze from its 1-megapixel “engine,” it's mind boggling how it's now just



ARDIE O. LOPEZ says he thrives in his line of work because technology has always been his “enabler.” His interests may be a tad more diverse than the interests of others, shifting between videography, music, photography, voicing, and writing—hence his enthusiasm towards the latest tools of the trade. Still, he reiterates that tools just provide an edge—and one must constantly work on what'll make good use of it.

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literally a small fraction of the average 8- to 12-megapixel rear cameras of your typical smartphone in comparison.

Of course, I've always reminded people not to gauge or judge a camera by its megapixel count, as ultimately good lens optics are a lot more important. But wow, today's smartphones check out well on both counts. With the kind of work I do as a photographer/videographer, I wouldn't be surprised if my daily usage of my smartphone taking photos and shooting video were summed up and compared with my total shoot time using my DSLRs and other cameras, and the smartphone wins out overwhelmingly. I've heard it many times, and I've probably mentioned it more often—the best camera for you is the one you have in your person most of the time, if not all the time.

So between a smartphone and a compact digital camera, especially for those who don't shoot for a living, it just won't

The smartphone is the new point-and-shoot. In fact, it's even upgraded the term to point-shoot-tweak-and-post.

make sense having two bulky things in their pockets. Guess which one will be ditched: the one that does everything, or the one that does just one thing and only at a fairly acceptable level at that? At this point, I would only reach for a dedicated camera (feels funny saying that) if it performs considerably better than the one on my current phone or if the situation happens to zero in on my phone cam's major and only limitation: reach. You know, if I can't walk on over to the stage in an event and block everyone's view just to take a close-enough photo of the speaker at the podium with my phone. Then again, if I were still close enough to shoot that very scenario, crop the photo just enough to bring the subject closer, tweak it to retain or even improve image sharpness, lighting, and minimize low-light noise and pixelation, I still would pick my phone. Just because I

could do all that, and post it on social media before I even finish walking back to my seat.

The smartphone is the new point-and-shoot. In fact, it's even upgraded the term to point-shoot-tweak-and-post. The more advanced cameras, like all those new awesome mirrorless models currently seducing weight-weary DSLR users like me; and the actual semi-pro to pro DSLRs out there can all be to a certain degree, point-and-shoots too, as their P and Auto modes allow them to be. But again, people would only really reach for them when they require a certain quality from their photos or video that the typical mid to high-end smartphone can't deliver... for

now. In that regard, the compact digital camera—or the “point-and-shoot of old”—is endangered and nearly extinct. Hence, forgive me for saying, it belongs in the museum of digital history.

I hope I don't sound like a smartphone evangelist, but I can't help gushing over mine that's well over a year old, especially now that it does an excellent job at being a remote controller and data receptacle for my DJI Drone, Canon DSLR, GoPro, and Theta 360-degree cameras; takes great photos and video, processes them, and allows me to spread them over almost instantly on the web, and even provide me with an incredible bonus... it lets me call and text people. ☺



T H E

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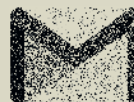
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ASSISTANTS

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CARS

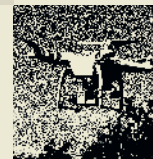
GLOBAL
POSITIONING
SYSTEM
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INTERNET
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M A G A Z I N E

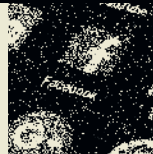
DRONES



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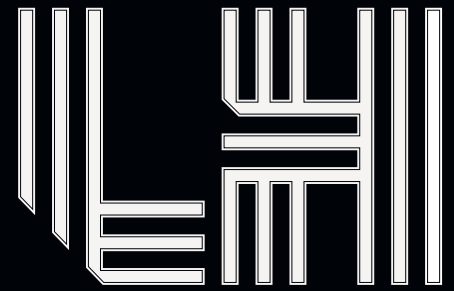
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CANDY VILLANUEVA-LYKES

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The eTEAquette guide

DRINKS

There's more to drinking tea than putting the tea bag into a cup.



JUST BECAUSE YOU have your pinky up as you sip your Earl Grey doesn't mean you're doing it the right way. In fact, you're doing the exact opposite. Although we've moved way past the Victorian era, every now and then it's nice to observe the genteel traditional tea time practices of the past. Here's how to sip and savor without making a fool of yourself (fancy hats and lace gloves optional):



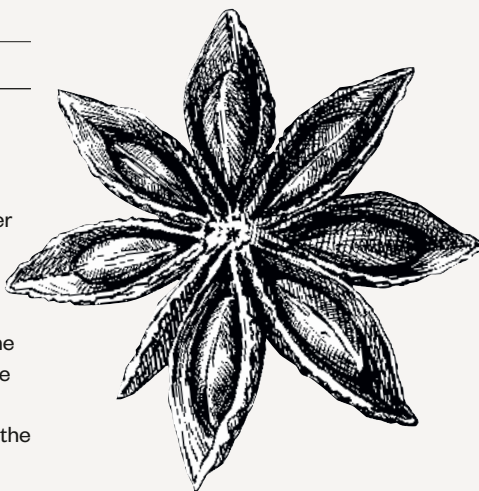
Holding the cup

hold the cup in the palm of your left hand and move it towards your four fingers spread slightly apart. Using your thumb, steady the saucer on the rim.

handle the cup held with the index finger through the handle. Use the thumb above it to secure the grip and the second finger below the handle. The bottom of the handle should rest on your third finger and the rest of your fingers should naturally curve towards your wrist.

DON'T by any means extend your pinkie finger. It's pretentious and even considered rude.

DON'T cradle the cup in your palm when it has a handle. Also avoid lifting the saucer with the cup.



When the cup runneth over

unfold the napkin over your lap, ready for use. If you have to leave the table, temporarily rest the napkin on your chair.

request for a clean saucer if the tea spills. You can also fold a paper napkin and slip it under the cup to soak up the spill. Remove the soggy napkin and place it on another dish or waste bowl.

DON'T overfill your cup. Prevent saucer spills by filling the cup about three-quarters full.

DON'T make a fuss out of a spill.

DON'T blot your lipstick with the linen napkin.

DON'T place a used napkin back on the table before the meal is over. The host usually signals the close of the tea by loosely refolding the napkin and placing it on the left side of the plate.

Swish and stir

swish the spoon carefully and silently back and forth without touching the sides or the rim of the cup. Place the spoon on the saucer behind the cup to the right of the handle.

DON'T sip from the spoon and never leave it in the cup.

DON'T swirl your drink around like it's a glass of wine.



Getting acquainted with the accoutrements

You may already be familiar with the teapot, sugar bowl, hot water kettle, creamer, sugar tongs, waste bowl, lemon plate, and lemon pick, but there are some paraphernalia that may leave you confused. Familiarize yourself with the following:



Tea strainers are placed on top of the cup to catch loose leaves when pouring tea from the pot.



Tea Infusers (tea balls, tea makers, or tea eggs) are stainless-steel wire-mesh balls used to steep or brew tea in a mug or pot.

Some teapots are designed with filters or infusion baskets. **DON'T** cram your tea balls with leaves to give room for the leaves to expand in the water.

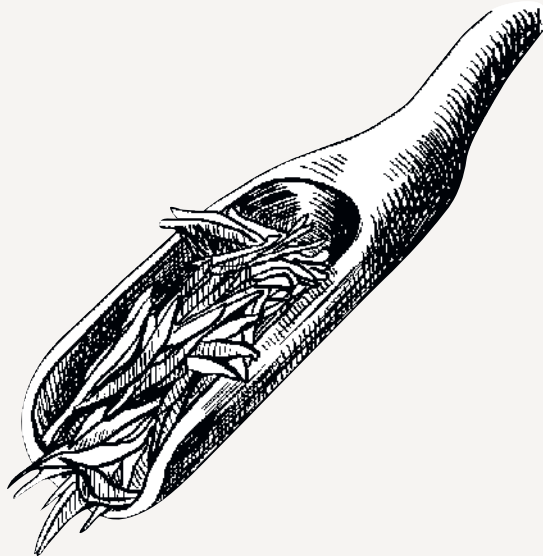


Caddy spoons are used to measure and transfer the tea from the tea caddy to the teapot.



Mote skimmers are silver spoons with holes in its bowl used to transfer leaves from the caddy to the pot. Also known as **mote spoons**, they are used to skim off stray leaves. use the sharp point on its end to unblock the clogged spout of a teapot.



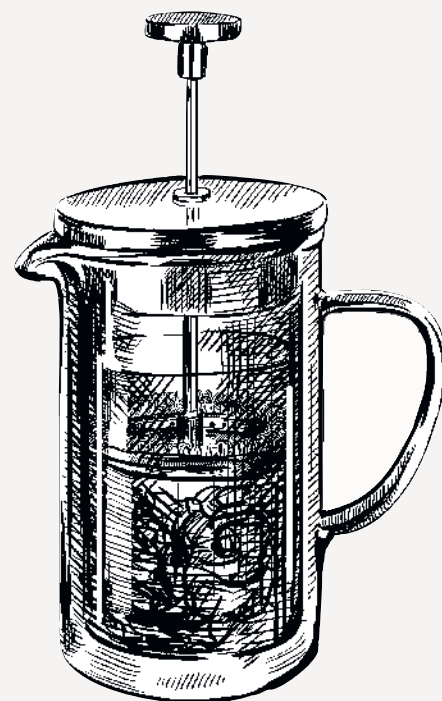


Green tea undergoes minimal processing so it maintains its vibrant color—usually a pale yellow or grassy green. The Chinese style of processing produces a wide array of flavors from grassy and sweet, to floral and fresh, nutty and roasted, to citrus or smoky with a lighter body. Green tea is rich in one of the most powerful antioxidants: epigallocatechin gallate, which helps promote better health and weight loss. Greens are also known to aid in brain function and help lower the risk of cancer.

■■ follow directions carefully when brewing green tea as it can easily go bitter.

Oolong, a favorite among connoisseurs, is a blend of green and black tea. High quality oolongs are known to be the most expensive of all varieties. Those with a deeper concentration of black are usually amber colored with notes of fruit, dark chocolate, and roasted sugar. Less oxidized varieties are characterized by lighter bodies, floral aromatics, and golden green infusions.

■■ brew oolong with whole loose leaves. Oolong in teabags don't have the full flavor and benefits as they are mostly made up of dried up tea dust or fannings.



White tea is made of baby leaves and is rarely produced. Because it doesn't undergo oxidation and made from the youngest shoots of the tea plant, white tea is known to be the healthiest of all varieties with the highest concentration of antioxidants and L-theanine, a rare amino acid found in high-quality varieties. Whites are appreciated for their complexity, subtlety, and natural sweetness. Health benefits of white tea include reduced risk of cancer and cardiovascular disorder. It's also known to help improve oral and skin health, relieve stress and anxiety, and help lift the spirits. ■■ brew white tea under very low temperature and steep under a short time to produce less caffeine. For higher concentrations of caffeine, steep longer with higher temperature.

Puer is a black variety that's aged for several years. Dubbed as the most mysterious, puer or pu-erh is prized for its medicinal properties. It's characterized by its deep earthy and rich flavor with no bitterness. It's also low in caffeine. Puers are fermented by exposure to microflora and bacteria, a process similar to producing wine or yogurt. The most expensive puers are over 30 years old. Puer is known to reduce bad cholesterol and aid with digestion. ■■ buy puer from trusted retailers. Cheaper puer tea may contain high levels of fluorine which can build up in the body and cause fluorosis marked by mottling of the teeth and calcification of ligaments. ☉

Know your tea

All true teas come from *Camellia sinensis*, a species of evergreen shrub, while any leaf, root, fruit, or flower that comes from a different plant is considered an herbal tea. For example, chamomile flowers and peppermint leaves are considered herbal teas, because they don't come from the traditional tea plant. It's important to distinguish between real tea and herbal tea since the flavor, health benefits, and nutritional characteristics vary from plant to plant.

The thousands of varieties can get overwhelming, but there are five major categories for true teas to know that can help when choosing your cup of tea.

■■ know that the categories are based on the fermentation process. Different flavors are brought out by selectively exposing the leaves to oxygen, a process known as oxidation or fermentation.

Black tea is fully oxidized which gives it its rich, robust, and full-bodied flavor. Usually dark brown with a reddish tint, it's a potent brew with a sweet citric taste. Black tea is known to help lower cholesterol and the risk of stroke and heart diseases. Rich in potent antioxidants like theaflavins and thearubigens, black tea is also known to lower the risk of cancer. ■■ drink your black tea with milk and sugar. Although black tea can be taken plain, the strong-flavored brew tastes better with milk and sugar. Milk tones down the tannin in the tea. ■■ pour the milk first before the tea to bring out a richer flavor. This will also prevent the discoloration of the cup.



FILE: / **Tips to buying your first home**

USER TAG

HOME

▶ **ALONG WITH YOUR** first job, first love, and first car is your first home—truly a sign that you've made it as a responsible, mature adult. (At least it would appear so!) Whether you're moving out of the family home for the first time or taking the plunge into ownership after years of renting, buying your first home is a big step that requires a lot of preparation in all aspects—physically, mentally, and most of all, financially. So, are you really ready to find a home to call your own? We've got a few things you need to remember before you bust out the "Welcome" doormat.

1.**Study up**

Before you buckle down and begin looking at houses, doing your research is a must. Start by scrolling through home blogs, watching copious amounts of HGTV, reading home and architecture books and magazines—soak up all the knowledge you can about the real estate market.

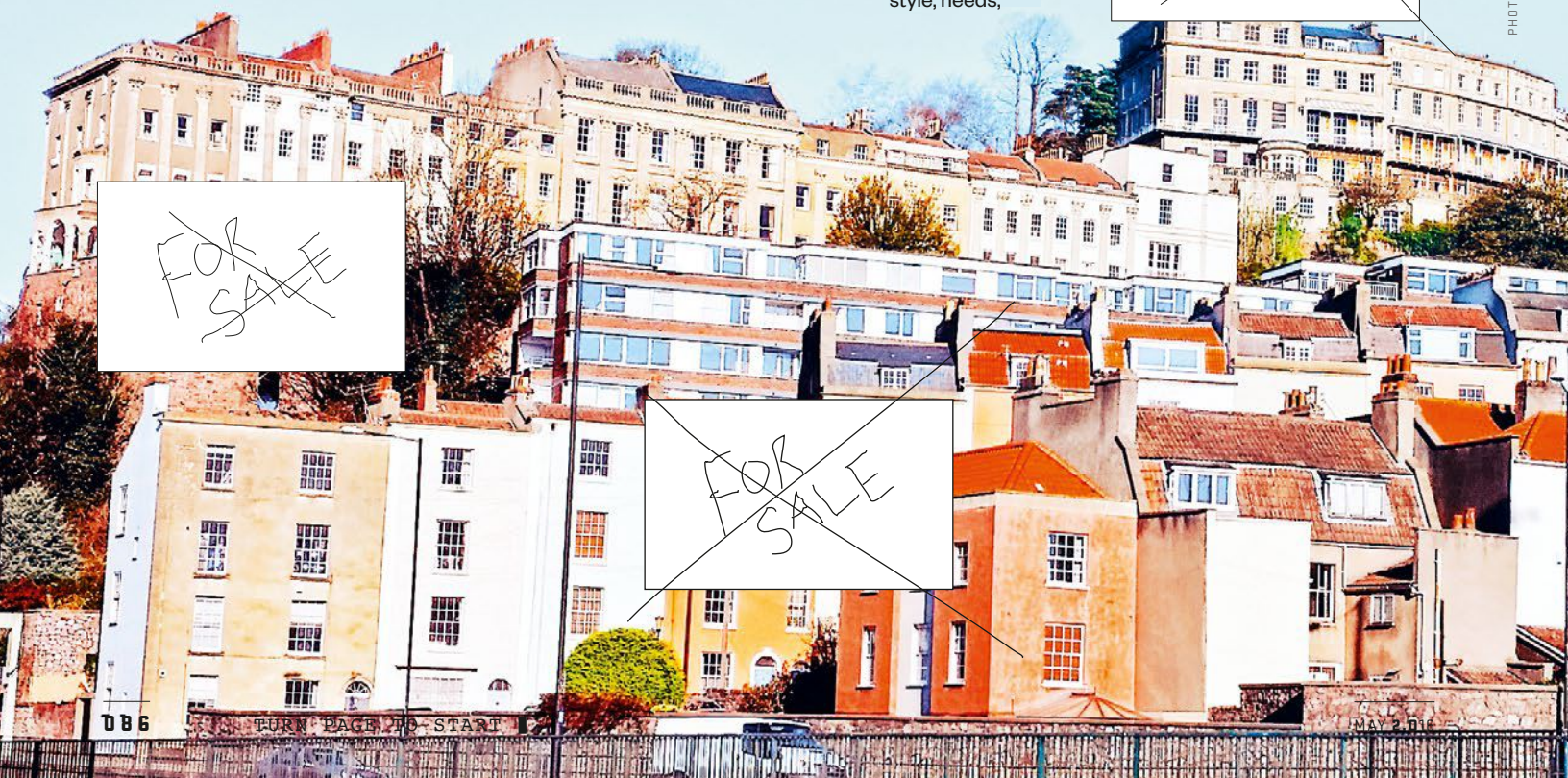
This will help familiarize you with the process of buying a house and learning the sometimes technical and hard-to-understand jargon of the real estate world ("escrow," anyone?). Don't be afraid to ask for help. A trusted family member or friend with experience in buying homes should be able to answer your questions.

2.**Make a list of your ideals**

This is where the fun part comes in. Get a piece of paper and a pen and list down your "ideals"—the specifics of your dream home. Start with your ideal type of home—do you want an apartment, a condo, a single-family detached home, a townhouse? Really analyze your lifestyle, needs,

and budget and figure out what kind of home suits you best. Then, think about your ideal neighborhood and location. Would you prefer a home right in the center of the urban jungle or somewhere a bit farther but with more

space? Are you a fan of modern and contemporary architecture or is an American-style home more your taste? Take the time to think through your wants and needs, so you'll be more prepared when you do start buying.



3.

Consider finding a real estate agent

If you have a busy schedule, finding a trusted real estate agent will help the process of buying your first home. Ask family members and friends for recommendations—they're sure to have a name they can refer. An agent will help narrow down your choices and handle all the messy, technical details that go into buying a home. In fact, an experienced agent can help you haggle for a better price! Just be prepared to fork over a bit more money for this extra help.

4.

Make sure you can REALLY afford it

With a new home comes extra expenses such as renovation and repairs, new furniture, homeowner's association fees (for some, at least), maybe even a higher cost of living especially if you're moving to a new area. The crazy unpredictability of real estate means having

to be ready to spend a little more to get exactly what you want; make sure you're financially prepared and mentally ready. If you're nervous, visit your preferred bank and ask about options on home loans and payment terms to help you out.

5.

Inspect before you sign that check

So you're almost at the finish line. You've looked at a few potential places, and you've got your heart set on the perfect place for you. But, is it really the perfect home? Before you sign on that dotted line, it's best to give your new place a full physical inspection. Probe the structure from top to bottom, going through each room individually as well as inspecting utilities, plumbing, gardening, and other areas of interest. Doing this will prevent any costly repairs down the line and will allow you to invest more in things like decor and furniture to match your personality.

6.

Scout your new neighborhood

Now that you're ready to move in and declare yourself an official first-time homeowner, it's time to know more about your new neighborhood. Set aside a few hours before move-in day to walk around or drive through the area. Is it pet-friendly? Are there a lot of young kids playing on the streets? Any food joints nearby or maybe a mall you can call your neighborhood *tambayan*? Is public transportation easily accessible? Are there any hospitals, police stations, or fire stations nearby? These are important questions that will make day-to-day life much easier and safer for you—find the answers!



Now that you've covered all the bases, the only things left to do are sign that contract, pack up all your belongings, and finally, get the chance to open that front door and say,

I'M HOME. ☉



FILE: /

Getting the most out of every drop

USER TAG

CARS

► **EVERYONE WISHES THEY** could drive a more fuel-efficient car every day, but this isn't the end-all when it comes to getting the most out of every drop. Any car can be fuel-efficient as long as you know how to maximize that full tank of gas each and every time.

The most obvious tip is to **[1] keep track of your fuel mileage**. It's often said that a car is frugal given how far it'll go between fill-ups. But this is a poor indicator of efficiency. The easiest way to get a more accurate reading is via the "full tank method." Simply fill up your car's tank completely until the nozzle automatically stops. Zero your trip meter and then

calculate how far you can go between fill-ups. If you traveled 100 kilometers and consumed 20 liters, you'll know that you do 5km/L (100 divided by 20). Repeat this exercise so you can get a better average of your car's efficiency. Modern cars come equipped with a trip computer; you can use this to your advantage.

Next, is to **[2] choose the right type of fuel**. Too many people debate the pros and cons of going for a more premium type of fuel versus the regular kind. Here's a very simple tip: follow your owner's manual. If your car says it needs 91 octane then there's no need for you to go 95 or 98 octane. This is literally burning money. That said, if you run a high-performance car or an older car, running higher octane fuel is good practice since it makes your car run smoother.

Third, **[3] check your tire pressure** and not just in a visual sense. Make it a part of your weekly routine to check your car's tire pressure using a proper gauge and compare it to the recommended tire pressure indicated in your owner's manual. An underinflated tire increases the rolling resistance of a tire and reduces efficiency. In addition, this can also make you more susceptible to punctures.

For those into weekend outdoor activities, it's good practice to **[4] ditch that roof rack during the weekday**. It penalizes your car's fuel efficiency in two ways. First, because of added weight, it reduces your car's fuel efficiency. Second, it also increases your car's drag. In some instances, removing the roof

PHOTO BY MICHELE SPINNATO/UNSPLASH



rack can make your car 15 percent more fuel efficient. And on the subject of weight, always remove unnecessary stuff from your car. You don't need 10 umbrellas at any given time, right? Weight is the number one enemy of fuel efficiency, so ditch the things you don't need.

Also, [5] **resist the temptation to modify your car.** Adding three spoilers will not add downforce; it will just increase the drag. The same goes for most aftermarket rims, especially if you're slapping on a set that's two or three sizes larger than stock. If you must modify your car, go for those that will make your car lighter. It's also worth noting that sticker tires, like high-performance ones, will give you better handling at the expense of fuel-efficiency. If you want a car that goes the distance, go for tires with low rolling resistance.

Lastly, [6] **keep your car in good shape.** It's been emphasized countless of times that having a more fuel-efficient car starts with one that's well-maintained. Have your car religiously serviced at the prescribed intervals. This varies from every 5,000 to every 10,000 kilometers. Always consult your owner's manual to find out when you need to have your car serviced. It must be remembered that a car, whatever the brand is, is a machine. And a machine needs to be properly maintained for it to work properly.

While on the road, there are also some ways you can improve fuel efficiency.

First, [7] **plan your route.** If you need to do errands, it would be great to plot it in such a way that avoids traffic and takes the shortest distance. If your errands take you to

a central business district like the one here in BGC or Makati, it's actually better for you to park your car and walk. Not only is this cheaper, but it's good exercise. Applications such as Waze or the MMDA app can also help you plan your route.

On the road, [8] **keep a light pressure on the gas pedal.** If you're gunning your car away from traffic lights, you're wasting fuel. Ditto if you're treating the expressway as a drag strip. Realistically, it's good to be light-footed, especially if you're just cruising along on the highway. Although the common thinking is to be as slow as possible, that's not always the case. You want to keep your car's engine revs as low as possible while allowing it to shift to the next available gear soonest. In addition, use your brakes as little as you can. You can do this by analyzing and predicting traffic up ahead. If you see the traffic lights ahead turning red in a matter of seconds, there's no need for you to accelerate any further; just coast before tapping on the brakes for you to make a complete stop.

If you must coast, [9] **coast in gear and not in neutral.** Cars nowadays shut off the fuel supply to the engine if you coast in gear. If you put it in neutral, the engine actually consumes some fuel to keep it running.

Next, air conditioning is a godsend invention that keeps us comfortable. But [10] **don't keep on blasting the A/C on full** as this can tax the engine. Choose a temperature that's actually comfortable and keep it that way.

Finally, if you find yourself stuck in traffic for a long time, [11] **shut off the engine.** Avoiding excess idling can save you some fuel. ☉



*IF YOU FOLLOW SOME OF THE TIPS MENTIONED INSTEAD OF DOING NOTHING SPECIAL, YOU SHOULD EXPECT TO SEE AN IMPROVEMENT SOMEWHERE BETWEEN 10 TO 15 PERCENT. DOESN'T SOUND A LOT? WELL, LET ME PUT THAT INTO PERSPECTIVE. IF YOU SPEND SOME P5,000 PER MONTH ON FUEL, A 10 PERCENT SAVING EQUATES TO P500. OVER A YEAR, THAT'S P6,000 OR ANOTHER MONTH'S WORTH OF GASOLINE IN YOUR TANK.



FILE: /

USER TAG

How to be an ethical vaper

ETIQUETTE



THE JURY IS still out on whether or not vaping—or the use of electronic cigarettes—is a safer alternative to smoking but we can't deny its presence. When vaping started to become popular, people were using pen-type devices that produced the same amount of vapor as a cigarette producing smoke. But now, the popularity of the term “cloud chasing”—producing a large amount of face-erasing vapor—has caught on and more and more people are taking notice for better or for worse.

If you're a vaper, chances are you've heard of the Golden Rule: “Don't vape where you can't smoke.” It's a very straightforward rule, but a lot of vapers (especially the newbies) don't seem to get it. Vapers can argue that it's not smoke, which is true, but other people still react negatively to seeing it. Common courtesy dictates to be mindful of other people around you, and that goes double when vaping.

So if you don't get it yet, here's a quick list of places where you **CANNOT** blow massive clouds:



PHOTO BY EDIG CLICK/FICKR

Malls

A lot of people have seen vapers doing their thing in malls. Don't be one of them. If there is a vape shop inside a mall, then the shop's immediate vicinity is the only place you can vape. And please be mindful of the shop's house rules, like "blow downwards" or "no cloud chasing." These rules are meant to keep the discomfort level of non-vapers to a minimum. Theaters are also off-limits to vaping! It doesn't follow that if you can get away with it, you should do it.

PUVs

The mode of transport (bus, jeep, shuttle, etc.) doesn't really matter. Enclosed or not, don't vape inside public transport vehicles! You're not really contributing to the image of vapers by trying to look cool with your clouds. There's a law that prohibits smoking in public utility vehicles, so don't try to make it harder for you and argue that you're not smoking. No one really likes to smell and see someone smoking in a jeep, so don't be that douchebag. If it was in your own vehicle, go ahead and fog it up (but risk getting flagged by traffic enforcers or crashing).

Supermarkets/Marketplaces

Your nearby *tiangge*, wet market, supermarket, or mini mart aren't places to vape as well. Sure, they have wide spaces, but it's still an area with people coming and going. One can argue that smokers do it in wet markets, but a vaper isn't a smoker anymore and should be a little more disciplined at least. If you really need to vape, go outside where there isn't much foot traffic and always remember to blow downwards or minimize the cloud chasing.

Events

It's always better to err on the side of caution and keep your e-cig or mod in your pocket or bag (safely turned off, of course) during conventions and events that fill up with people quickly. Some events like open-air events and concerts are a little more relaxed to vapers and smokers, but just be sure you're not blowing clouds to where you're obstructing someone else's view of the stage. You're there to enjoy the concert, not to show off your skills at blowing clouds. Again, douchebag move to cloud chase to the point where no one can see the stage anymore. Closed-area concerts are always no-vaping zones.

In front of kids

There will be family reunions aplenty, and that means a house full of kids. While the little ones think all your cloud production is cool, don't indulge them by blowing vapor in front of them. I would always try to not smoke in front of kids, because they could pick it up. We don't really need kids being influenced to vape when they don't even smoke. Plus, their parents might find it wrong and intrusive, so when the adults excuse themselves to go out and smoke, it would be best to follow them out to vape away from kids. Also, you get the bonus of sharing the benefits of vaping into your yosi/break conversations.

Walking on the sidewalk

Yes it's a public place and yes, there's no law (in certain municipalities, at least) that prohibits smoking while walking along the sidewalk, but that doesn't mean you can vape, too. No one really wants to walk behind a smoker, especially when foot traffic is high, so don't make it uncomfortable to other people by showing off how much clouds you output while walking. No one got recognition for chewing gum while walking, so there's no real reason to vape while walking along the busy sidewalks of Makati. Plus, your massive cloud can potentially be dangerous when crossing, as people behind you may have a hard time seeing traffic lights or incoming traffic.

Office

You're not cool by stealth vaping and blowing under your cubicle. Most offices don't allow vaping while you're at your desk, so don't be that guy that secretly does it but everyone in your vicinity knows anyway. Be sure to clear it with your HR department if vaping is allowed within office premises. If you happen to belong in a company that allows vaping, then good for you! Although try and not be that cloud chaser who singlehandedly fogs up the entire floor with your tricked out build and fresh batteries. It could be annoying to non-vapers and potentially disruptive.

The lesson here is to not try and find loopholes when it comes to the Golden Rule of vaping. Always keep in mind that vaping was invented to help smokers quit the habit, not to be cool. The image of vaping isn't very well-received at the moment, with countries banning it outright. Vaping etiquette is there for a reason: to teach vapers a form of discipline that allows them to enjoy vaping but not being a major pain in the butt for non-vapers. ☺



FILE:/THE NEWBIE'S GUIDE TO

Moments by Facebook

USER TAG

APPS

► **BACK IN THE '90S**, I'd share my photos through negatives or 4R printouts from the nearest Kodak Express branch. Later on, I went full digital—from dead services Friendster and Multiply and forgotten ones like Shutterfly and Photobucket to Facebook. Then it was on to single snaps on Twitter, Instagram, VSCO, and (briefly) Snapchat. Sometimes I'd still send a bunch of photos through Facebook Messenger, Dropbox, Box, WhatsApp, or Viber, or revert to good ol' e-mail. • Last year, Facebook decided to add to that big mix with Moments, its third free standalone app after Facebook Mobile and the aforementioned Messenger. Facebook Corp. also owns Instagram and WhatsApp, so it already has *plenty* of our personal data. Would you give more through Moments? Here's what you'll find if you choose to use it.

The basics

It has one goal: to collect all the photos taken during special gatherings and events—say, your birthday party, last night's wild night out, or a recent out-of-town trip—and keep those photos accessible to only you and your select friends. Everyone in the group can upload their photos too, resulting in a trove of snaps that can then be downloaded or shared through Facebook and other social media. Easy, breezy, beautiful.

The “all in one place” idea for photographs isn't novel. Back in 2011, there was Comemories, a free online service that explicitly states its purpose as a private storage and sharing hub for group photos. It also has a corresponding iOS app, but it seems both the app and service aren't actively maintained anymore. A Google search has yielded newer services like Cluster and Shoto, with the same purpose. But Moments is the first we've seen to be backed by a major social media company, which accounts for some pros and cons.

The positives

Since Moments links to your Facebook account, the app has access to your Friends list. It makes recommendations on who to tag and include in your Moments through facial recognition—a perk or a scary prospect, depending on who you talk to. In our test, it correctly recognized which friend should be tagged; I had to add only two additional names. So Big Brother-y! It also suggests which photos to share with your contacts, a helpful feature for those who often forget to include specific photos of certain events.

Moments organizes your media by date, place, friend(s), and Smart Labels. In my case, there were two Smart Labels: groups (a quite literal interpretation, with all my group shots collected), and videos. The app is also very easy to use, and doesn't require complex thinking from its users. Tap, tag, share, and choose which photos from your friends you want to download. Done!

The biggest advantage for me is that you can keep your photos only within your chosen social circles, and your Moments are kept separate from your regular Facebook

**The cue**

Go to momentsapp.com or download it through Apple's App Store or Google Play.



feed. No more fiddling with user filters and Friends list before sharing photo albums! The former co-workers I rarely meet up with, the *chismosa* cousins and comment-happy *titas* and *titos*, the ugh-inducing exes, or those annoying 100-posts-a-day FB/Twitter/Insta “friends” won't ever see what I share on Moments, unless I allow them to. Hopefully Facebook doesn't mine Moments photos for its highly annoying On This Day feature. (Please, Facebook. Stop that, and move on already.)

The negatives

Remember when Facebook basically forced everyone to install Messenger? Its approach for Moments isn't as aggressive, but it's still another standalone app to download and install. Given the myriad ways people already share photos, Moments feels like it's another unnecessary option for a long-answered problem.

And not everyone will want to use another app, or literally shift the conversation elsewhere. A friend asked if she could still see my photos if she doesn't install Moments. (Answer: you can't.) My Moments post also automatically started a separate Facebook Messenger group thread, confusing some of my friends who've gotten used to checking and responding in an older thread. In the end, I wound up uploading my photos to our old thread—and out of our group of seven, only one installed Moments. Old habits do die hard.

Much has been said about Facebook's “Seen” feature for Messenger, which Moments also has. As with Messenger, I don't want others to know if I've seen what they posted and shared, nor do I care if they've seen mine.

One last thing. We were supposed to try out Moments back in September 2015 (three months after the official launch), but back then it was available only in select markets. We downloaded it through a VPN, but since we wanted to test it with our PH-based friends, we couldn't do so properly. We found out this March that finally, *Pinoy* Facebook users can now download and use

Moments, but... why the slow rollout? ©

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Tom Clancy's The Division

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United we stand, divided we fall

TOM CLANCY'S THE DIVISION

PLATFORM Sony PlayStation 4, Microsoft Xbox One, PC

GENRE Massively multiplayer online role-playing game, third-person shooter **DEVELOPER** Ubisoft Massive **MODES** Multiplayer **RATING** Mature

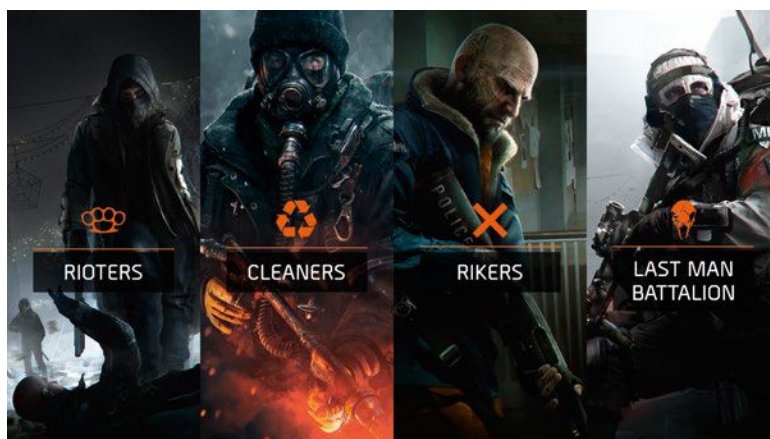
IF AT FIRST you don't succeed, try again. For years, Ubisoft has tried to build a perfect multiplayer arena amidst success in the single player world. Their efforts led to unique multiplayer concepts like *Assassin's Creed's* free-for-all assassination arena and *Watch Dogs's* game hacking mechanic. No one really stuck around or grew exponentially, though. This year, Ubisoft released *Tom Clancy's The Division*, a brand-new IP that puts the spotlight on the multiplayer aspect. Promoted since 2013, the game enjoyed record-breaking sales almost immediately. Is the hype really worth it?

■ **Rockin' that Ubisoft feel.** At its core, *The Division* is a third-person, role-playing game. It carries a similar format familiar to those who've played Ubisoft RPGs before. The huge playable map is divided into districts. Each district is then "captured" by completing missions allotted for them. The map is also peppered with collectibles a perfectionist can collect to spend some more time in virtual Manhattan. This isn't Ubisoft's trademark for nothing. Half of *The Division* is classic Ubisoft in action that single players can enjoy without fussing over other people.

■ **No zombies in this apocalypse.** *The Division* is set in a post-apocalyptic version of Manhattan. An artificially-bred super virus was released on Black Friday through dollar bills. The game takes place after society breaks down and all hell breaks loose. You play as an agent of The Division, a secret government agency comprised of sleeper agents tasked to restore order when normal society fails. The anarchic society is divided into factions: the JTF, which you ally with; the Rioters; the Cleaners, who believe in killing all the infected; the Rikers, who are convicts taking advantage of the anarchy; and, the Last Man Battalion, a private military company. Concept-wise, *The Division* takes a fresh, new look at the apocalypse by focusing on the decline of humanity, rather than farfetched zombies or nuclear fallout.

■ **Forgettable story.** Unfortunately, as its name suggests, *The Division's* story reads like a Tom Clancy novel—slightly riveting, but ultimately forgettable. You don't play as a named protagonist with a story or actual development. You're just a highly skilled agent among many who just happened to take down the major faction leaders in a chaotic city. Ubisoft's desire for total character immersion makes me feel more of an outsider looking into a maelstrom of forces.

■ **Tidbits to the apocalypse.** Whereas main story progression felt flat, *The Division* shines brighter with the little tidbits you find about the story. Some missions expand the lore surrounding your characters—you try to find their loved ones, you learn about their motivations,



etc. The collectibles you are tasked to find are cellphone recordings, incident reports, and profiles of ordinary people as they face the viral outbreak. The encounters you have with faction leaders are short boss fights, but I appreciated that they and their faction's motivations were at least painted clearly with some collectibles.

■ **Standard MMORPG stats.** Character progression works similar to most games of the same type. Stats are classified into three basic types: damage, health, and skills. There are various smaller stats, but players can easily focus on one archetype. It's a balance of gear that can get users the best build they can make.

■ **Multiplayer mayhem.** A good chunk of the game is also dedicated to multiplayer. First of all, the single player can be done in co-op mode, which helps when you play the main missions in a harder difficulty. Secondly, roughly a fourth of the map is walled off for a free-for-all area called the Dark Zone where you can interact or even kill other players. The Dark Zone is inhabited by stronger AI enemies who drop stronger loot. Killing these enemies alone or with a group for their loot constitutes the main gameplay of this area. Hardier players can also opt to kill fellow human players for their hoard of goodies. These traitorous players are then classified as rogue agents, a mechanic that makes the Dark Zone so much more interesting. Rogue agents have bullseyes painted on their backs. Non-hostile players can kill rogues with no consequence and for more points/loot. Some players don't really mind being classified rogue and some even enjoy it. Unless you're playing with valued friends, you really have no idea who you can trust. Oh, and the main way you can use the loot you get is extracting it by helicopter. You call for one by flare and it comes after a minute and a half, which means you're announcing to everyone that you have gear worth extracting. Good luck. The Dark Zone makes for the game's funniest, tensest, most challenging, and most frustrating moments.

■ **Always online.** Due to its multiplayer nature, the game requires players to be always online even when playing alone. This can get frustrating when I want a session in

single player, but it's not much of a hassle with the proper Internet connection. Being always online, the map is a shared world all the time. In single player, there are safe houses where other players can hang out. Even while outside the Dark Zone, I can hear explosions and helicopters emanating from its walls. And they aren't simulated. The game still generates the happenings within the Dark Zone in real time if you're close enough to the wall. It's a nice touch that brings more realism into the playable area.

■ **Back to the grind.** The Dark Zone's ultimate goal is to hunt for the most powerful weapons and gear available in the game, similar to how most MMORPGs go. Gear can be obtained through looting, crafting, or buying. In the end, it's still a grind. Hunting for new gear every time without an end goal may get stale after a period of time. If not for the future content, this game will end up in shelves after a certain period of time.

■ **Incredibly detailed urban setting.** When it was announced, *The Division* was praised for its near-realistic visuals. Ubisoft has been notorious for downgrading its graphics in the final product. If anything, the graphics took only a slight hit in the down-grade department. The visuals are still very detailed. With the immensity of the map, there are still some areas that lack any sort of interactivity.

■ **Coming soon.** This review was made with the base game in mind. Until the end of the year, Ubisoft will be releasing new content, paid and free, that expands the things you can do and fixes some imbalances in game-play. A newly-released multiplayer game will definitely suffer some bugs and problems. So far, I haven't had many game-breaking bugs. My game did crash a few times, though. I have also heard reports of server crashes and lags. With content coming in the future, the chances of solving some of the bugs I've heard is high.



9 | DESIGN
9 | BUILD QUALITY
8 | ENJOYABILITY
8 | PERFORMANCE
9 | VALUE FOR MONEY

8.6

OVERALL RATING



VERDICT

The Division shows Ubisoft's potential in the MMORPG market. Despite its flaws in the single player, *The Division* is still a fun game to play alone or with friends. The jury should still be out on whether its final state is a product that will last years or just fizzle out of popularity. At the moment, its positive trajectory will keep players entertained for months.



Mobile workhorse LENOVO YOGA 900

DISPLAY 13.3" QHD+ IPS (3,200 x 1,800 resolution) **OPERATING SYSTEM** Microsoft Windows 10 64-bit
PROCESSOR Intel Core i7-6500U @ 2.50GHz **MEMORY** 16GB RAM **STORAGE** 512GB Samsung SSD **CAMERA**
 1MP 720p HD CMOS **AUDIO** JBL Stereo speakers with Dolby DS 1.0 Home Theater Certification **CONNECTIVITY &**
I/O PORTS Wi-Fi 802.11 a/c, Bluetooth 4.0, 2 x USB Type A 3.0, USB Type C 3.0 with video-out, DC-in with USB 2.0
 Function, 4-in-1 card reader, audio combo jack **DIMENSIONS & WEIGHT** 324 x 225 x 14.9mm, starting at 2.8lbs

9 | FORM FACTOR
 9 | BUILD QUALITY
 9 | EASE OF USE
 8.5 | PERFORMANCE
 8 | VALUE FOR MONEY

8.7

OVERALL RATING

NOT EVERYONE THESE days work from their offices alone. Telecommuting is becoming a more common experience. And with that you'll need a machine that can handle your workload with ease. Enter the Lenovo Yoga 900.

■ **High style.** I'm still a fan of the watchband hinge the Yoga series has. It adds that style factor while making sure that whether as a tablet or traditional laptop, the attachment is secure. The magnesium panels covering the top and bottom of the laptop up the style quotient, even the faux leather/rubber-like inside makes it look sleek while providing a nice texture. It's light and thin that carrying it around isn't too much of a hassle.

■ **Bright but not quite.** It's pleasant to look at the display. It has excellent viewing angles, too. What's missing is it could be a bit brighter. And it needs less bezel, too, just to give you more screen real estate. It's screen is glossy, which admittedly distracts me a bit, but isn't a fingerprint magnet.

■ **Loud but not too much.** Don't expect heart-thumping bass from this machine. It's loud enough to fill a small- to medium-sized room without sound breaking. But you can get a somewhat different experience

depending on what surface you put the laptop on because of its bottom-firing speakers. If you use it in tent mode, you get better sound out of it.

■ **All about them keys (and the pad).** You get short travel distance with the Yoga 900 and shallow keys, which sometimes did make me miss keys I intended to press. But I appreciate that the keys are backlit and can even be adjusted with two levels of brightness. The touchpad is very responsive but not excessively. It doesn't mistake my left clicks from my right ones.

■ **Smooth performer.** Doing various work-related tasks like document editing with multiple Chrome pages open and music or video playing in the background doesn't cause the Yoga 900 to stutter. Throw in basic photo editing and it can still hold its own. This isn't a gaming machine but you can play less graphic-intensive games here, too, if you want.

■ **Hot hot heat.** This thing can heat up a bit at the top part of the bottom half when placed on flat surfaces while you have it on when you charge. Thankfully, temperature goes down fairly quickly if you pick it up and let it cool off.

■ **Good for a day's work.** If you're judicious, meaning you don't blast music through the speakers and max out brightness and maybe even turn off Wi-Fi, you'll get through the work day with ease. If you have some of these things on, you can squeeze around five to six hours. Max it all out and you get around four hours.



VERDICT

The Lenovo Yoga 900 is a boon for a constantly mobile worker.

PROTECT YOUR EQUIPMENT WITH APC BACK-UPS BX650LI-MS



POWER OUTAGES ARE unfortunately something we have to deal with. What we wouldn't want to happen is damaging our devices like computers, routers, and even home entertainment systems. The solution? An uninterruptible power supply like the APC by Schneider Electric Back-UPS BX650LI-MS. This device comes with 650VA voltage and 325W wattage with an input voltage range of 180V-270V. It promises a runtime of up to 12 minutes so you can properly shut down your connected equipment and appliances. It has two universal receptacles and an automatic voltage regulator. It's available in 800VA (480 watts) and 1100VA (600 watts). This retail is for P2,100.

Loving life without wires

JBL EVEREST 300 BT

FREQUENCY RESPONSE 10Hz-22kHz **SENSITIVITY** 100dB/1kHz, 1mW **DRIVERS** 40mm
CONNECTIVITY & I/O PORTS 3.5mm auxiliary cable, microUSB 2.0, Bluetooth 4.1 **WEIGHT** 245g

IT WASN'T TOO long ago when my backpack was always filled with spaghetti monsters made of laptop chargers, earphones, mice, and whatnot. Their noodly appendages often threatened to choke my digital world. Unknotting wires were unwanted pastimes from yesteryear. Years later, tentacles were being lobbed off in favor of wireless. Despite the trend, headphones are only slowly migrating to wireless. Unveiled at last September's IFA Berlin, JBL unveiled the Everest 300 BT, an affordable pair of wireless headphones poised to bring the medium to a more general public.

■ **In your face.** Compared to JBL's other offerings, the Everest 300 BT has more organic curves and less cut-off edges. This results in a more form-fitting design that complements its comfort. Despite being made with smooth matte plastic, the headphones clean easily with cloth. They are available in white, black, bright blue, and bright pink.

■ **Cushy.** The Everest 300 is fitted with comfortable, sculpted cushions. They don't press down on my ears. Instead, they fit around its form, similar to what you get from memory foam. They didn't even slip off my ears while I was walking around. I had no trouble wearing them for hours on end.

■ **Loving that balance.** Personally, I was skeptical with sound quality, given the technology's lukewarm reception in the industry. I was pleasantly surprised when I finally took them for a spin. I tried them out with jazz, classical, and rock. Neither the bass nor the treble overpowered the music, resulting in sound that felt just right. Instruments were differentiated just right. Overall, the sound was very dynamic and not overly booming or tinny.

■ **Press that button.** The Everest's controls are easily accessible. At the back, the right cup has the power

button, the share button, and light indicators for both. Holding down the power button powers it up. It's also interesting to note that the headphones automatically turn off after some time of inactivity. The share function works for sharing music between Bluetooth-capable devices. The bottom of the right cup houses the USB port and the 3.5mm port. Meanwhile, the left cup has the volume buttons, the play/pause button, and the microphone.

■ **No more noise.** The Everest 300 BT also boasts of noise canceling capabilities. While they don't have the technology that vacuums out all sound (which I find uncomfortable anyway), they can block out the sound in a noisy room without feeling like I'm stuck in an abyss.

■ **Delayed response.** Out of the box, the Everest suffers from delayed response from device to headphones. Its vanilla state makes it impossible

to watch movies with. Fortunately, JBL released a free firmware update available on their site which fixes this flaw. Yes, it's possible to upgrade the Everest.

■ **New dog forgot old tricks.** The Everest may have done its best in the wireless department, but it left its wired roots behind. There is a distinct decrease in audio quality. It's still workable, but after being babied by the wireless's superior quality, I'd prefer going wireless all the way.

■ **Lacks a bag.** The Everest 300's package sadly lacks a bag to carry the headphones in. While the pair can be easily placed around the neck while traveling, it would have been better if a bag was provided, especially since the headphones are already foldable to begin with.

■ **So much battery.** JBL boasts that the headphones are capable of an uptime of 20 hours. After testing them out, all signs point to yes. If you realistically use them for a few hours at a time, you're in for weeks of usage without needing to recharge.

■ **Affordable price.** Considering that the Everest 300 is equipped with Bluetooth, noise-canceling technology, and comfortable cushions, P7,499 is one hell of a bargain. Not a single peso is wasted on these babies.

9 | FORM FACTOR
 9 | BUILD QUALITY
 9 | EASE OF USE
 9 | PERFORMANCE
 10 | VALUE FOR MONEY

9.2
 OVERALL RATING



VERDICT

If you had any doubts about wireless headphones in the past, the JBL Everest 300 BT will blow you away. With ergonomic design and effective technology bundled together with an amazing price, these headphones are must-haves for an audiophile's collection.



Hotline bling

HAPPY MOBILE D-LITE PLUS 2

DISPLAY 5" HD IPS **SIM** Dual SIM, dual standby **OPERATING SYSTEM** Android 5.1 Lollipop **PROCESSOR** 1.3GHz dual-core **MEMORY** 1GB RAM **STORAGE** 4GB internal, expandable up to 32GB via microSD **CAMERAS** 5MP rear, 2MP front **CONNECTIVITY OPTIONS** GSM, 2G, 3G, Quadband, Wi-Fi, Bluetooth **BATTERY** 2,500mAh battery

8 | FORM FACTOR
8 | BUILD QUALITY
8 | EASE OF USE
7 | PERFORMANCE
9 | VALUE FOR MONEY

8

OVERALL RATING

A BUDGET PHONE is a budget phone, right? Not when it comes fitted with hardware you'd only expect from higher priced models. From its impressive high-def IPS display to its metal body frame, the Happy Mobile D-Lite Plus 2 could sit comfortably with models commanding much more than its P2,999 price tag.

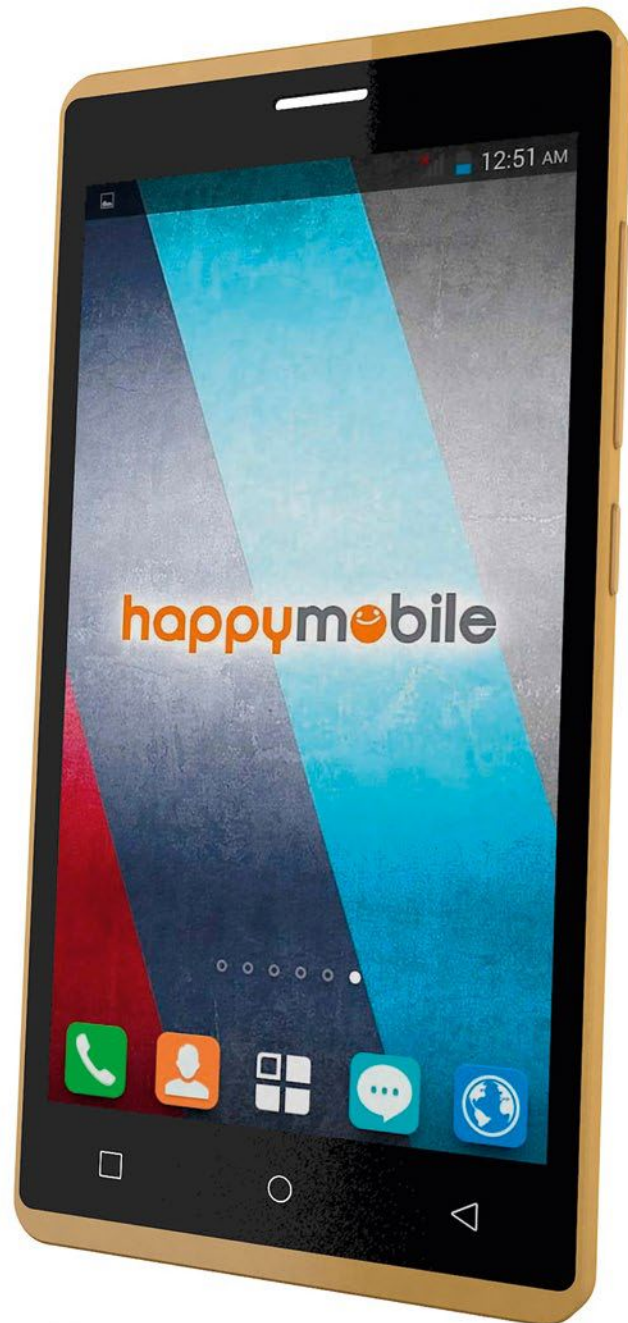
■ **Feels more than 3k.** Most budget friendly phones feel cheap and flimsy; not this one. An aluminum frame wraps around the D-Lite Plus 2 giving it a solid feel while providing structural rigidity. The gentle curve around the edges of the back cover plus its smooth metallic finish further gives the illusion that the phone is actually thinner than it is.

■ **Not lightning fast but quick enough.** Sometimes you can't just rely on manufacturer's specifications. On paper, this phone doesn't impress much but in actual use I found it to be quick and responsive to the touch. HD video streaming and moderate gaming posed no problems at all. If there's one downside, it's storage. However, at this level, I believe 4GB is generous.

■ **A display you can brag about.** The one thing that sets this phone apart from the budget horde is its HD IPS display. You won't have to squint through the glare nor struggle to find the optimum viewing angle. Whether gaming or streaming, the display response is quick while colors remain true and crisp.

■ **Sounds just about right.** Because video streaming is such a pleasure on this smartphone sound quality becomes relevant. Thankfully, the D-Lite Plus 2 delivers quite a hefty amount of volume despite its rear firing configuration.

■ **Average battery life.** The batteries D-Lite Plus 2 are by no means exceptional but they will get you comfortably through the work day and most of the evening. However, using it to stream videos or play games will only net you about four to five hours of screen time.



VERDICT

It would be unfair to rate the Happy Mobile D-Lite Plus 2 against phones in the mid- or high-priced range. After all, you get what you pay for. Happily, this phone is decked out with features that bring more value than what you bargained for. So I reckon it wouldn't be quite unfair after all.

A fine phone

OPPO F1

DISPLAY 5" IPS HD (1,280 x 720 resolution), Corning Gorilla Glass 4 protection
SIM Dual **OPERATING SYSTEM** ColorOS 2.1 based on Android 5.1 **PROCESSOR** Qualcomm Snapdragon 616 octa-core **GPU** Adreno 405 **MEMORY** 3GB RAM **STORAGE** 16GB internal, expandable up to 128GB via microSD **CAMERAS** 13-megapixel f/2.2 rear, 8-megapixel f/2.0 front **CONNECTIVITY OPTIONS** Wi-Fi 802.11 b/g/n, Bluetooth 4.0, USB OTG **BATTERY** 2,500 non-removable **DIMENSIONS & WEIGHT** 143.5 x 71 x 7.25mm, 134g



WHEN ONE CLAIMS to be an expert at something, you approach the person or the thing with a certain skepticism or reverence, depending on what is shown to you. So, how does the OPPO F1 hold up as a self-proclaimed “selfie expert?”

■ **Capable selfie shooter.** For the F1, OPPO’s focusing on the front-facing camera for you to get the most out of your selfies and group shots. True enough, the 8-megapixel front shooter can produce some flattering images. Even with OPPO’s take on beauty mode, it doesn’t overexaggerate the “editing,” even with its filters. If you need flash, this comes with a screen flash that’s less blinding and more flattering than using a front-facing flash.

■ **All those extras.** The rear shooter is also rather capable filled with extras mobile shooters will appreciate. Photos taken in brightly lit areas come out well enough for social media sharing. Colors come out mostly accurate. Shots taken indoors come with the expected noise. I appreciate that the F1 not only shoots in HDR but in RAW as well, plus there are other shooting modes you might enjoy.

■ **High-end looks.** OPPO did well by borrowing design elements from its more expensive offerings and putting that into the F1. It comes with a metal backplate and plastic accents that don’t take away from the premium look of the device. And when you think about its price, you’ll feel a bit more forgiving. It’s such a light device but still feels solid in hand. Perhaps, my only complaint is it’s a bit slippery.

■ **Take a hard look.** The F1 comes with a 5-inch display with a 720p resolution. Before you argue that 720p is lacking, it’s fine for the size of the phone. Plus, colors pop from the screen brilliantly without oversaturating the things displayed. Its Corning Gorilla Glass 4-protected screen is a bit of a fingerprint magnet though and has visibility issues outdoors (even with brightness cranked up).

■ **Smooth operator.** Packing in 3GB of RAM with its Qualcomm Snapdragon 616 octa-core processor is a pleasant treat performance-wise. Stuttering or apps crashing wasn’t an issue. But it does heat up a bit when I use the

camera or Snapchat. Playing your favorite mobile games shouldn’t be an issue but what you have to look out for is storage space as you only have 16GB internal storage, if you can’t move apps to the microSD, that is.

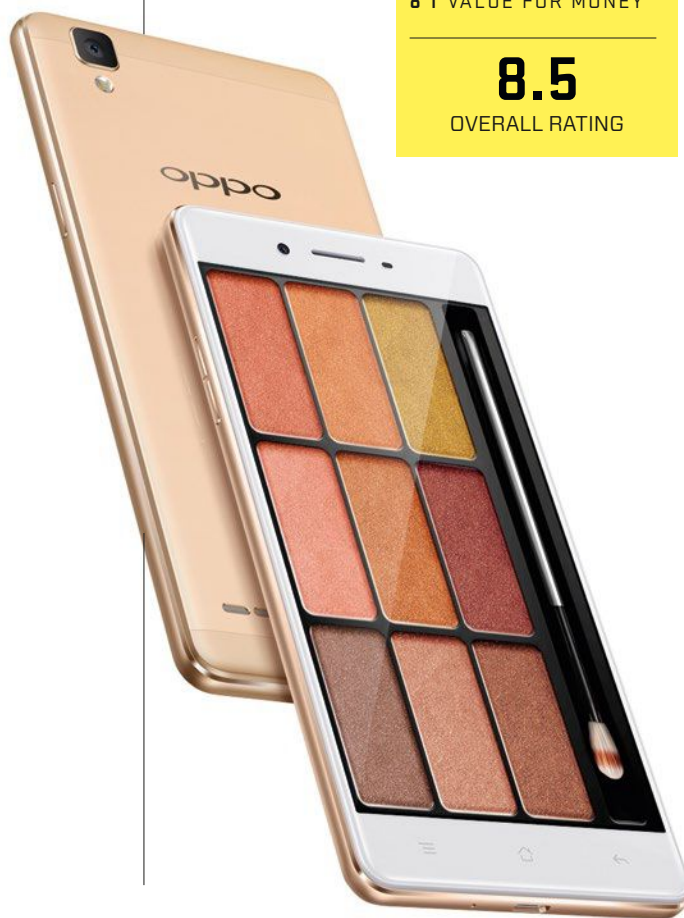
■ **Missing vanilla.** I’m a purist when it comes to the user interface and I’m still partial to Android’s stock UI. The F1 comes with OPPO’s ColorOS, which does offer a lot of customization options, but it isn’t for me. If you want an app drawer, you won’t get that here. And the return of the menu key means pressing the leftmost capacitive button doesn’t bring up your recent apps at once; you need to do a long press before you get that.

■ **Power through the day.** A video loop test had it lasting around 10 hours, which should carry you through the day easily.

9 | FORM FACTOR
 9 | BUILD QUALITY
 8 | EASE OF USE
 8.5 | PERFORMANCE
 8 | VALUE FOR MONEY

8.5

OVERALL RATING



VERDICT

The OPPO F1 isn’t the best in its segment but it’s one of the leading devices you wouldn’t regret buying.



Imaging goes full circle

RICOH THETA S

BODY TYPE Ultracompact **MAX RESOLUTION** 5,376 x 2,688 **EFFECTIVE PIXELS** 14MP
SENSOR SIZE & TYPE 1/2.3" CMOS **ISO** Auto, 100-1600 **MAX APERTURE** F2 **MAX SHUT-TER SPEED** 1/8000 sec **VIDEO RESOLUTION** 1,920 x 1,080 (30fps), 1,280 x 720 (15fps)
FORMAT MPEG-4, H.264 **STORAGE TYPES** 8GB onboard memory **USB** USB 2.0 (480 Mbit/sec) **DIMENSIONS & WEIGHT** 44 x 130 x 23mm, 125g

JUST HOW DOES the concept of being able to move around what's framed in a still image sit with you? Has it ever occurred to you that you could now get to look at what's behind that subject in a photograph, not to mention what's on its left and right or even top and bottom, that wasn't visible at first glance? Surprisingly, there are still a lot of people who haven't seen or experienced 360° photos or videos. Their priceless reactions when they do are still part of the pleasure of using a camera that provides them.

There are now 360° cameras that consumers can have access to and the choices are quite extensive, making it a challenge to compare them and choose one for yourself. One brand produced a model at the onset of truly portable 360° cameras and has come up with a significant upgrade from the last—enter the pretty handy and snazzy Ricoh Theta S.

■ Pocket-sized photo machine.

At roughly the size of a regular Snickers chocolate bar, the Theta S sums up as a very portable, notably capable, easy to use 360° camera that produces relatively high quality “all-around” photos and video. It can handily shoot on its own, but the flexibility and usefulness of semi-manual controls and image settings for it are only accessible with a paired smartphone. The Ricoh Theta S, coming from its previous Theta predecessor, is now equipped with two 1/2.3 14-megapixel CMOS sensors, under a pair of bright new f/2.0 lenses mounted back-to-back. One can shoot with it in full Auto Mode, or choose between Shutter Priority, ISO Priority, or Manual Modes. There are various White Balance settings to shoot from, an ISO range of 100-1600 for stills, and up 100-400 for video (which is quite disappointing). It can do long exposures to up to a 1/8000 shutter speed for freezing fast moving subjects. Maximum pixel size of the photos it takes is 5,376 x 2,688, and video resolution tops out at 1,920 x 1,080 pixels (Full HD) at 30 frames per second. The Theta S has an internal/non-expandable 8GB storage, and it provides decent usage life from its built-in battery.

■ Looking at it from all angles.

After your friends see sample shots

by the Theta S on your smartphone, then you whip it out to take shots with them in it, they usually are surprised firstly, by its diminutive size, then secondly, the fact that it doesn't robotically spin or rotate (to give a semblance of a logical explanation as to how on earth it comes up with a 360° image) to take a shot. It delightfully boggles the mind at first at how its software manages to seamlessly fuse together “stereoscopic” images taken by its twin “fisheye-like” lenses. It's a total blast how you can swipe to spin, pinch, or stretch the images on a whim, and see almost every angle you wish—more so, because you can also do that on high definition video as well.

■ **Shooting made easy.** Using the Theta S is as straightforward as can be. Once you've downloaded the free Theta S app, pairing it via Wi-Fi is painless. Just key-in a specified portion of its serial number as its password, the Theta S locks on to pair with your Android or iOS smartphone quite quickly. The app's interface is thorough with all the pertinent camera controls; a contrast to the camera's streamlined minimalist design. On Auto Mode, it's as easy as pressing the big red button on your phone's screen, then a conspicuously pleasant chirping sound indicates that it's taken the shot. In about five to eight seconds,

8 | FORM FACTOR
 8 | BUILD QUALITY
 9 | EASE OF USE
 8.5 | PERFORMANCE
 8 | VALUE FOR MONEY

8.3

OVERALL RATING



the photo is transmitted and processed to be viewable as a 360° image on your phone. The same procedure goes with shooting video. You'll have to remember though that what you're initially previewing on your phone are images or footage that are still saved in the Theta S, and that you'll have to select and transfer them if you want to keep files in your phone, for later viewing or sharing on social media—which it does by default to either Facebook, Twitter, or Tumblr, whichever among the three Theta partners you enable.

■ **Some constraints.** With ample lighting, images and footage produced by the Theta S are crisp and sharp. They tend to suffer from image noise quite quickly in low light situations though—most probably due to its small image sensors. A way around this is, if you're taking



still, opt for Shutter Priority—so you can keep the ISO low and let a longer exposure compensate for it, that's if your subjects aren't fast moving or moving at all to prevent motion blur. Video with the Theta S is a bit more affected by lighting conditions, and requires more adequate lighting. If you shoot video mostly outdoors during the day, this shouldn't pose much of a problem.

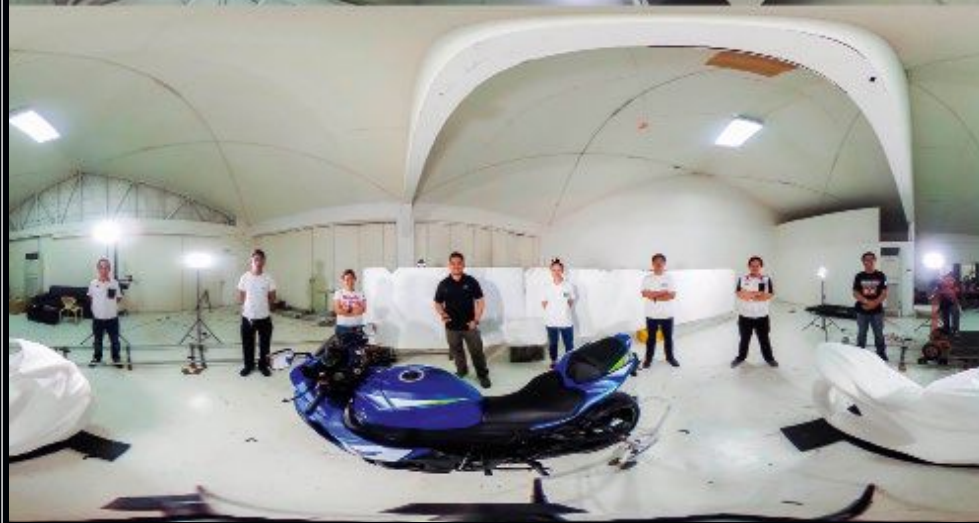
■ **Going live.** For some individuals the Ricoh Theta S can be a significantly useful broadcast tool that can provide a unique viewer experience. Things like a die-cast car swap meet, a cosplay convention (where interesting characters are always milling around), or even an international auto show. The Theta S with its built-in micro-HDMI output is also capable of live streaming. Think of the possibilities.

■ **Justified price.** Again, for its impressively small size and fairly reasonable cost of P19,990 (locally available through CameraHaus), the consumer-level quality of the Theta S's photo/video output is justified. In fact, since the majority would view posts from it via smartphones, it's pretty fine by me. But of course, an improvement on the next version would be more than welcome. Do I hear 4K video capability and a 21-megapixel sensors lined up next?

■ **At the end of the day.** All things considered, you, your friends, heck people you don't even know, will want one. Admittedly, the Theta S in my book is 80 percent a novelty more than anything else. It lets you create a little virtually explorable world every time you take a photo or shoot video. Just think of the stuff you can come up with on your next major family or school batch reunion, and how easily you can bring out the wacky side of everyone with this seemingly unassuming little device.

VERDICT

I was so thrilled and amused while testing it, that I had to acquire a unit for myself to add to my arsenal of image acquisition equipment for work and leisure. The Ricoh Theta S will definitely push 360° media forward a good deal. If you don't believe it, check its photos and videos, and "look around you."





Breathtaking display ASUS MX27UQ

DISPLAY Wide screen 27.0" IPS (3,840 x 2,160 resolution); 1.07 billion colors, 100% (sRGB) color saturation, 5ms response time
VIDEO 8 preset modes (sRGB, Scenery, Theater, Standard, Night, Game, Reading, Darkroom); 3 skin-tone modes; 4 color temperature modes; QuickFit modes (Letter, A4, B5, Alignment grid, photo); GamePlus modes (Crosshair, Timer, FPS counter); low blue light; HDCP support **AUDIO** 2 x 3W (RMS) stereo with ASUS SonicMaster and ICEpower | Bang & Olufsen technology
I/O PORTS HDMI (v2.0), DisplayPort 1.2, HDMI (v1.4) signal inputs; HDMI, DisplayPort AV audio inputs; 3.5mm audio output; SuperSpeed USB charger port **DIMENSIONS & WEIGHT** 614.4 x 429.5 x 225.4mm (with stand); 5.5kg net weight

WHETHER YOU ARE a computer professional or just spend an inordinate amount of time in front of a screen, a good quality monitor is something your eyes will thank you for. How much will one cost you?

■ **Understated yet sophisticated.** The MX27UQ carries an aesthetic that steps way beyond the utilitarian. The monitor features Asus's signature frameless design and ergonomic stand with an "Icicle Gold" brushed metal finish. The rear cover slopes gently away from the sides producing a very slim side profile. The 6mm bezel is virtually invisible on all but the lower part of the screen where it's pronouncedly wider to accommodate user controls and the down-firing Bang & Olufsen speakers.

■ **A sight to behold.** Beyond its elegant aesthetics, the MX27UQ stuns with its breathtaking 4K Ultra HD display. Typical with IPS panels, the screen can be viewed clearly

from almost every angle. Display quality is phenomenal making it ideal for long hours of work or play. If you haven't experienced 4K video, this is the display on which you should; it defines the true meaning of ultra-high-definition.

■ **Sounds about right.** Personally, I prefer a separate multi-speaker option but I must admit that the

built-in B&O audio package isn't bad at all. The 3-watt pair can be quite loud when turned all the way up; sans chest thumping bass, of course. Uniquely, you can stream to them from your smartphone via Bluetooth.

■ **Ready to party.** You'll never be left wanting for connectivity with the MX27UQ. The monitor is equipped with two HDMI ports (v1.4 and v2.0), one DisplayPort 1.2, a standard 3.5mm earphone jack, a "SuperSpeed" USB charger, and, as previously mentioned, Bluetooth. The USB charger delivers up to 1.5A power, allowing 40 percent faster charging rates when compared to USB 3.0 charging.

10 | FORM FACTOR
 10 | BUILD QUALITY
 9 | EASE OF USE
 9 | PERFORMANCE
 8.5 | VALUE FOR MONEY

9.3

OVERALL RATING



VERDICT

For the average computer user, the ASUS MX27UQ might seem extravagant. But for those who put a premium on quality and professionals who require the best performance from their monitors, this 4K beauty would be an ideal choice despite its price tag. Bottom line, it's not for everyone; but if you can afford it, it will be worth every peso you'll have to shell out.

Spending less for more

KATA i3L

DISPLAY 5" IPS HD (1,280 x 720 resolution) **OPERATING SYSTEM** Android 5.1 Lollipop
SIM Dual SIM **PROCESSOR** 1.3GHz MT6735 quad-core **GPU** Mali-T720 **MEMORY** 1GB RAM
STORAGE 16GB internal, expandable up to 32GB via microSD **CAMERA** 13MP rear, 8MP front **CONNECTIVITY** Wi-Fi, Bluetooth, GPS, 3G, LTE, microUSB 2.0 **BATTERY** Removable 2,100mAh

PRICE IS A sweet spot that smartphones want to hit with ultimate precision. Too little, they won't have enough resources to include amazing features. Too much, no one would buy them. Having a sub-P10,000 price tag inspires both curiosity and skepticism. This year, tech newcomer Kata released the Kata i3L, a 4G/LTE-compatible follow up to last year's Kata M2L, which carries a P5,599 price tag. With that in mind, can P5,599 buy you a phone that's competitive and capable?

■ **Spending that extra peso on design.** The Kata i3L's design is outfitted with metallic, matte plastic (accented with slightly embossed branding) at the back, enveloped by a similarly-textured rim at the sides, and finished with a plate of glass. It may not be astounding, but for its price range, the i3L stands out from its competition.

■ **Mini screen in your pocket.** For P5,599, the i3L already packs in a 5-inch screen that's fully capable of being a portable screen for watching movies. More surprisingly, the screen maxes out at 720p resolution. For its price, the i3L shows its ability even in just the entertainment department.

■ **Cameraman.** Surprise, surprise. The Kata i3L is equipped with a 13-megapixel/8-megapixel front/rear camera. Besides displaying content, the Kata i3L can create its own. It doesn't lack in resolution whether it's from the front or the back. Unfortunately, brightness and contrast were sorely lacking, resulting in somewhat dull photos. Memory grabber? Yes. Smartphone photographer? No.

■ **Network capable.** The "L" in its name stands for LTE. The Kata i3L is 4G and LTE capable. Surfing the net is speedy and reliable, which works wonders for the next bullet.

■ **TV capable.** The i3L doesn't have TV or DTV functionalities, but it does have broadcasting network apps, like Discovery, CBS, and Fox. Since most of these are geo-locked, with the exception of Netflix, Kata has also included MegaVPN, a VPN app that bypasses geo-locking. There are times when this doesn't work, but when it does, I'm able to watch full episodes of available shows like *Mythbusters*. The quality is similar to YouTube clips, so don't expect the full HD package. In the same vein, the phone will also work with local streaming options iflix, HOOQ, and blink.

■ **Drowning in bloatware.** My biggest beef with the Kata i3L is its enormous amount of bloatware. Even if the phone comes installed with Lollipop out of the box, the software feels restricted. For one, the layout seems stuck in the Android Ice Cream Sandwich stage. There's no app drawer. Kata also fitted the phone with its own set of apps that clash with Android's own stock. For example,

there are two apps each for the dialer, file manager, and music player (which can't be uninstalled, I might add).

■ **Player, not a fighter.** The Kata i3L is equipped with a 1.3GHz quad-core processor with a Mali-T720 GPU. The combination is more than capable of playing local favorites like *Clash of Clans* and *Clash Royale*, but I wouldn't push it for games that require a lot of power in the graphics department. Playtime was choppy even with a relatively simple game like *Jelly Jump*. Heat wasn't much of an issue, though.

■ **Battery efficient.** Despite carrying a paltry 2,100mAh battery, the Kata i3L powered through the whole day (around 10 hours) on regular use (call and text functions, sporadic app use, and the occasional camera snap) with some juice left to spare. Hardier use will bring this down to a lesser, but still workable 6 hours.

8 | FORM FACTOR
 8 | BUILD QUALITY
 7 | EASE OF USE
 8 | PERFORMANCE
 10 | VALUE FOR MONEY

8.2

OVERALL RATING



VERDICT

At P5,599, the Kata i3L is a top contender for its price range. It doesn't come with the best software package out of the box, but it carries the tools to be a formidable smartphone in the budget-conscious world. Spending a little more effort to tailor-fit the smartphone to your preferences is a worthwhile endeavor, making the Kata i3L a good phone.



How to be a Philippine politician

POLITRICKS

8 | DESIGN
10 | LEARNING CURVE
9 | ENJOYABILITY
9 | PRODUCT QUALITY
10 | VALUE FOR MONEY

9.2

OVERALL RATING

CREATORS Totally Wholesome Games **MATERIALS** 104 cards
PLAYERS 2-5 **SUGGESTED AGE** 18+

You have to admit, politics in the Philippines is never dull. Unfortunately, most of it is for the wrong reasons. Corruption, assassinations, and bribery are just some of the things that are all too common. But we Filipinos persevere. What we see as negatives—we make fun of. So, it was only a matter of time for someone to make a card game parodying our insane politics. Enter *Politricks*.

■ Card games are more fun in the Philippines.

Politricks is themed after the dirty side of Philippines politics, where buying votes, exposing skeletons in the closet of rivals, and even ambushing rivals is fair game. Playing the game, it can be pretty accurate how Philippine politics is perceived. It isn't a surprise as the game is made by Totally Wholesome Games, a local company.

■ **May the worst player win.** *Politricks* is a card game where the one who gets the most votes (obviously) wins the game. The game is easy to teach and learn. Vote cards and candidate cards are separated from the deck. The deck is then shuffled and then handed five cards per player. A player can't exceed seven cards in hand and must discard the excess cards. At the start of their turn, a player takes two cards from the deck and may play two actions. There are three kinds of actions a player may do. One action is to declare money. Only declared money may be used to either buy votes or pay for action cards. The second action is to buy votes. Each vote card has different values depending on the location on the card. The third action a player can do is play action cards. These cards have different actions such as playing getting votes for free and stealing money to the dreaded "Ambush" card which removes a player from the game and then taking their votes. The game ends when all vote cards are taken.

■ **Roleplay your candidate.** Candidate cards aren't necessary for the game but these do allow for more advanced

gameplay. They can be chosen or picked at random. Candidate cards give players additional abilities during the game. These can range from giving the players additional votes at the start of the game to having the ability to steal money from other players during the game.

■ **The more the merrier.** This game plays better when there are three or more (up to five) players are playing. Part of the fun is also goading and teasing the other players when playing cards you know will disrupt their game. *Politricks* is a good party game to play even if the election season is over. It's a fun game at the expense of Philippine politics.

■ **The art of the steal.** As the game is all about cheating and stealing, the game itself is pretty much as steal at P600. Since *Politricks* is a locally made game, it takes advantage of not having any import tax. You can get *Politricks* in most board game stores and cafés in the Metro.



VERDICT

Politricks is a fun party game. Although the novelty of the game might wane once the election season is over, it's still a fun game to play while talking about the political culture in the Philippines.

NEW NIKON LENSES ARE IDEAL COMPLEMENTS FOR EVERY KIT BAG



FITTING PERFECTLY INTO every camera bag and achieving striking shots from wanderlust explorations to new locale experiences are the new NIKKOR lenses of AF-P DX NIKKOR 18-55mm f/3.5-5.6G VR and AF-P DX NIKKOR 18-55mm f/3.5-5.6G recently announced by Nikon Corporation.

Capturing shots of unique dining experiences or treasured commemorative seconds get almost effortless with excellent portability from both lenses. Enjoy uninterrupted moments with fast, quiet autofocus from the first AF-P lenses from Nikon. Remember memories in clarity with the assistance of refined lens optical performance and Vibration Reduction (VR) mechanism.

Both lenses draw its respective form and function from renowned NIKKOR technology expertise of compelling autofocus performance, advanced optical elements, and excellent agility. The AF-P DX NIKKOR 18-55mm f/3.5-5.6G VR and AF-P DX NIKKOR 18-55mm f/3.5-5.6G make perfect matches for anyone making their first foray into photography with DSLR cameras.

The Nikon AF-P DX NIKKOR 18-55mm f/3.5-5.6G VR and AF-P DX NIKKOR 18-55mm f/3.5-5.6G are already available. You can get the AF-P DX NIKKOR 18-55mm f/3.5-5.6G VR with the Nikon D3300, D5300, and D5500. ☉

A luxurious beast

FORD RANGER WILDTRAK

ENGINE 3.2-liter IS turbocharged direct common rail injection
TRANSMISSION 6-speed manual **SUSPENSION** Double wishbone with coil springs/Leaf spring **TIRES** 265-60R18 **BRAKES** Ventilated disc/drum **L X W X H (mm)** 5,354 x 2,163 x 1,848 **WHEELBASE (mm)** 3,220 **CURB WEIGHT (kg)** 3,200 **OTHER FEATURES** ABS with EBD; ESP; Front driver, passenger, rear, curtain airbags; Adaptive cruise control; 8-way power adjust driver seat; dual-zone air conditioning system; 8-inch TFT touch screen and dual TFT cluster multi-function display; SYNC 2; AM/FM/CD/iPod/USB 6-speaker system

WHENEVER WE THINK of pickup trucks, utility, hauling, and toughness come to mind. We hardly ever really think about luxury, safety features, or driving in style. But with the Ford Ranger Wildtrak, you get all these things wrapped into one luxurious beast.

■ **Plush interior.** Double-stitched swathes of leather and composite material line the dashboard, giving it a sporty, yet posh and accomplished finish. The driver's seat is electronically adjustable eight ways, and both front seats are equipped with a heater (not that it's a necessity in our weather), but it does add swag. It comes with an 8-inch touchscreen infotainment

system driven by Ford's Sync 2 program that comes with all the bells and whistles from Spotify, emergency assistance, voice control, and access to mobile apps. It may take some time to figure it out, but what electronic gadget doesn't these days? The Wildtrak also comes with a reverse camera, Hill Descent Control, front and rear parking sensors, and adaptive cruise control, much like what you'd expect from high-end SUVs and sedans. Oh, and there's the electronically controlled transfer case that takes you from rear drive to 4x4 with a flick of a switch and on the move. The two-tone seats also add sportiness and class to an already impressive interior.

■ **Powerful.** We already know about the power coming from the Wildtrak's 3.2-liter diesel engine. It definitely has been much talked about. But after driving it for the first time, I was certainly pleased with what was under the hood—lots of power and torque. But what impressed me the most is its car-like comfort and handling. I can't stress enough how much fun I had driving

the Wildtrak. It corners like a truck would, as expected, but is much smoother on the turns than most trucks or SUVs, and the steering—that magnificent steering—is definitely top in its class.

■ **Tiny quibbles.** What surprised me about the test drive was that little red light thingy I instantly noticed being beamed from the dash as I tried to overtake a slow vehicle as I was trying to get out of our village. It's called Collision Alert and Lane Guidance system. At first I thought "Oh great! Another safety feature that separates the Wildtrak from the rest of the pack," but after awhile it kind of annoyed me as it would beep seemingly every minute or so while driving in traffic. In a country where there's no escaping traffic, it dawned on me that this may be a small problem I'd have to deal with. With its nine-inch ground clearance, and its 800mm water-wading capabilities, it does address our current flooding woes, though. Overall I'd say I had a very pleasant and fun weekend driving this luxurious beast.

9 | FORM FACTOR
 9 | BUILD QUALITY
 10 | EASE OF USE
 9 | PERFORMANCE
 9 | VALUE FOR MONEY

9.2

OVERALL RATING

VERDICT

It has everything you'd want in a pickup: power, safety features, hauling capacity, rugged good looks, drivability, and comfort. If you'd ask me if it's worth buying one, I'd say "Truck, yeah!"





8 surreal things you'll experience with a Lotus

LOTUS ELISE

ENGINE 220ps/250Nm supercharged DOHC 1.8-liter inline-4
TRANSMISSION 6-speed manual **SUSPENSION** Double wish-bone with Eibach springs and Bilstein dampers **TIRES** 175/55ZR-16 / 225/45ZR-17 **BRAKES** Ventilated discs with ABS, EBD **L x W x H (mm)** 3,824 x 1,719 x 1,117 **WHEELBASE (mm)** 2,300 **CURB WEIGHT (kg)** 914 **OTHER FEATURES** LED daytime running lights and taillights, Alpine head unit, power windows, central door locks with remote plus engine immobilizer, Bosch Electronic Differential Lock (EDL), Electronic Stability Control, dual front airbags, side impact beams, detachable soft top, machined aluminum shift knob and handbrake lever, tire puncture repair kit (no spare tire)

SLIPPING BEHIND THE wheel of a Lotus for the first time is not about driving in the conventional sense of the word. It's about a completely different and otherworldly experience. Here are eight points you'll realize after spending some quality time in one.

■ **You'll look and feel tall beside it.** I'm not tall by any stretch of the imagination, but while most cars's heights reach up to my neck or chin, the Elise's roof stands level with my lowest rib.

■ **Getting inside the Elise is a yoga exercise in itself.** The door opening is tiny and very low. (You can remove the soft top to ease ingress and egress, but it's unbelievably complicated to remove—and even more difficult to put back on.) You need to really bend your back and legs. Then you have to splay your legs across a foot of side sill before dropping your butt onto the deep bucket seat. Once seated inside, that imposing side sill is level with your ribs (again). Which means you feel like you're sitting inside a bathtub. Getting out, you need to spread your legs up and outward just to clear that sill. Ladies, you're paparazzi fodder if you're in a miniskirt. Or any skirt for that matter.

■ **You sit eye level with most cars's tires.** People in a Suzuki Alto look like they're in a big SUV. With your butt a mere six inches off the ground, you're really in

a big go-kart. Getting a parking card from a machine or getting your order from a drive-thru window will make you wish you had the long reach of Michael Jordan. That said, the Lotus is so low you're tempted to just drive straight under toll barriers.

■ **Expect zero luxury features or even the most basic creature comforts.** There are no door pockets, cubbyholes, cupholders, or even a glove box! Your date's handbag stays on her lap or on the floor. Don't forget what car you're driving when you suddenly go binge shopping in your supermarket with someone. Briefcases for a presentation? They both go between your colleague's legs. There's no trunk.

■ **No carpeting or floor mats.** Your feet rest on bare aluminum. Park it under the hot sun and you're literally toast. But the aluminum—and the curvaceous fiberglass body shell—is an ultra-lightweight industrial thing of beauty.

■ **The "entertainment system" is an old school 1-DIN Alpine head unit.** No multi-connectivity devices here. Even the A/C is your '70s rotary 3-speed knob with matching rotary thermostat knob.

■ **The minimalist Elise may be the farthest thing from a luxury car, but it's the closest thing to a road rocket.** And it does rocket—from 0 to 100 km/h in 4.6 seconds with a top speed of 235km/h. Power comes from a mid-mounted supercharged 1.8-liter engine mated to a six-speed manual. Both engine and gearbox are sourced from Toyota, which should give the rear-wheel drive Elise commendable reliability and fuel efficiency (as long as you don't floor it).

■ **Light weight (2,000-lb curb weight), a low center of gravity, and a short 2,300mm wheelbase give the Elise that "cornering on rails" feel.** It's simply one of the best-handling cars on the planet—with grip levels approaching 1G. It doesn't have power steering (underscoring its go-kart feel), which means your arms get a good workout when maneuvering into and out of tight parking spaces. With very short suspension travel, ride quality is very firm—but not punishingly so.





10 | FORM FACTOR
8 | BUILD QUALITY
5 | EASE OF USE
10 | PERFORMANCE
8 | VALUE FOR MONEY

8.2
OVERALL RATING

VERDICT

Definitely not your everyday car. But the perfect elemental drive when you want to blow away the cobwebs. Just make sure there's no traffic first.

May 2016

DID YOU KNOW...



THAT STEPHEN KING DIDN'T TAKE A SHINING TO THE MOVIE ADAPTATION OF, WELL, THE SHINING?

IF YOU'RE A die-hard King fan you might already know this and it seems his opinion about the movie hasn't changed one bit. In a recently published interview with *Deadline.com* King said, "I think *The Shining* is a beautiful film and it looks terrific and as I've said before, it's like a big, beautiful Cadillac with no engine inside it. In that sense, when it opened, a lot of the reviews weren't very favorable and I was one of those reviewers. I kept my mouth shut at the time, but I didn't care for it much." He felt like Stanley Kubrick couldn't make the film believable and he wasn't keen on Jack Nicholson's performance either. He did eventually take matters into his own hands when he worked with director Mick Garris to release another version of *The Shining* back in 1997, which aired on ABC. ©

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